SEPTEMBER 1952

COMMENTARY

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The Study of Man—
Sociology Learns the Language of Mathematics — ABRAHAM KAPLAN

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Irving Kristol — Isa Kapp — Edward N. Saveth
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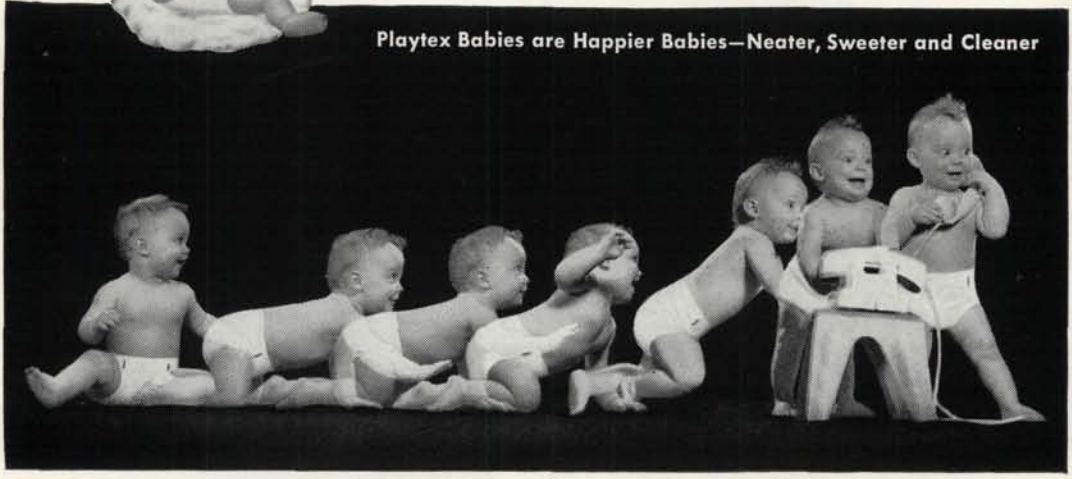

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The Liberal and American Freedom *Sidney Hook*

Much of informed opinion throughout the free world now takes it for granted that American freedom is imperiled, and that the independent practice of intellectual activity in this country proceeds under a "reign of terror." Professor Hook, for many years a leader in the defense of unhampered cultural and intellectual work, reviews the contemporary scene in the light of these rapidly spreading beliefs; and charges leading intellectual figures with irresponsibly propagating an untrue view of the existing realities.

Protestants, Catholics, and Jews *Will Herberg*

Tension between Catholics and Protestants in this country has reached a degree of strain recognized – and deplored – by leaders of both groups; and it is principally around the issue of the permissible relations between public education and religion, and between private parochial schools and the state, that this conflict has become most serious. Will Herberg reviews the areas of controversy, and analyzes the positions of the leading religious groups from the point of view of the legitimate boundary between God and Caesar.

The Table Talk of Adolf Hitler *Francis Golffing*

The world still lives under the trauma of Hitler; it is revealing that no major study of this demonic and unique figure of world history has been published in the seven years since his death. Francis Golffing reviews the memoirs of some of his intimates and attempts a rough and tentative sketch.

The Jews of France *Arnold Mandel*

A report on the cultural and institutional life of one of the oldest communities of Ashkenazic Jewry, and now the largest in Europe (outside of Russia).

The Festival of Succoth *Theodor H. Gaster*

Another in the series of Professor Gaster's articles on the leading Jewish holidays that has been appearing in COMMENTARY.

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COMMENTARY

PARTY MANEUVERS AND CIVIL RIGHTS REALITIES

Chief Danger: Isolation of the Negro

OSCAR HANDLIN

SPEEDING down in taxis from their Loop or near-Loop hotels to the convention Amphitheater, and especially under a prevailing westerly wind, most delegates were aware that they were coming into the huge enclave of the Chicago stockyards. Few, however, could have known that the long South Side streets they were traversing —Wentworth, South Park, Michigan, Halsted—had been the channels of vast displacements of people, the effects of which were even then substantially influencing the outcome of both conventions.

Down these avenues the hundred of thousands of Negroes who had been drawn to Chicago since the First World War had edged steadily southward, pushing out the earlier residents, in a series of movements symptomatic of changes that have everywhere been transforming American life. The politics of this generation will certainly reflect the disturbing influence of these changes. Both conventions, uneasily wrestling with the problem of civil rights, gave ample evidence of that.

In the usage of the last decade, "civil rights" has come to refer to a pattern of state and federal legislation designed to protect the equality of status of all Americans regardless of race, religion, and national origin. Directed against the extra-legal forms of discrimination and segregation, such statutes have aimed to provide the citizen with the support of government when his rights were violated. The issue today is particularly critical in the areas of employment, housing, and education.

AROUND a few great issues in American history—the powers of the federal government, slavery, the taming of the corporations, the great depression—parties have been formed and wrecked. To some it now appears that the next such issue in our domestic history is to be that of civil rights, which first showed its power when it divided the Democratic party in 1948, and which in 1952 agitated the Republicans for the first time and almost divided the Democrats again. Unquestionably it will be with us for a long time; and it is in the perspective of the historical significance of civil rights that COMMENTARY presents two articles on the issues involved and the ways they are being met. In this article OSCAR HANDLIN, Harvard University historian who recently won the Pulitzer Prize for his book *The Uprooted,* describes the impact of the civil rights issue at the two presidential nominating conventions in Chicago. Following this, HERBERT R. NORTHRUP analyzes the chief point of contention dividing advocates and opponents of federal fair employment practices legislation: whether or not the only—or the best—way of solving the problem is for the federal government to be given the power to compel employers to cease discriminatory hiring. Mr. Handlin is the author of *Boston's Immigrants, This Was America,* and of many studies of American immigrants and "minority" problems.

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There are many precedents for the civil rights laws and few doubts as to their constitutionality. Indeed, the only serious argument now is whether they are properly the function of the states or of the central government. Generally, those opposed to any action take the states'-rights position, those in favor of it turn to the federal government.

With the approach of the presidential election, popular sensitivity to the issue heightens. From year to year the politicians can make a working adjustment to the desire of their constituents, shaping their positions to the temper of local conditions. It is only in the presidential election that these matters are debated nationally and it becomes important for an Alabama Democrat to take account of the views of a New York Negro.

In 1952, when the civil rights question made its appearance in both conventions, the party leaders of both treated it as an intruder from the world outside the Amphitheater. Preoccupied with partisan problems, Democrats and Republicans alike maneuvered so as to evade the necessity—or opportunity—of taking a stand. That is one part of the story—the series of political tactics which disposed of civil rights at the conventions.

There is another part that deals not with the Amphitheater but with the long streets on the outside, not with political tactics but with the hopes and hatreds of millions of men. This is, obviously, distinct from any political juggling. Only, there will come a day when the cool characters who moved about the hall, as insulated from the streets as from the stockyards stench, may discover the connection between their actions and the events just outside.

THE political story is readily told. The Republicans who assembled early in July were mainly preoccupied with the Taft-Eisenhower split over foreign policy. Nevertheless, there was a notable attempt to attract the interest and support of the substantial ethnic groups which, for the past quarter-century, have been adding to the Democratic majorities. The convention managers, apart from their usual desire to spread the honor of delivering the invocations across the whole religious spectrum, seemed to have in view two large elements.

First, as in 1944 and 1948, they hoped to draw support from such groups as the Polish-Americans, the groups that might be swayed by their attachment to the subjugated countries of East Europe. In Chicago, Youngstown, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and other cities, these folk form a significant part of the voting population. Were they drawn to the Republicans, or even neutralized, the normal Democratic majorities in those places would shrink, thus decisively affecting the outcome of the election in the crucial states of Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. It was not just by chance that the Republican convention was treated to the singing of a Polish women's choir; and its orators gave particular emphasis to the perfidy of Democratic statesmen who had allowed Poland and Czechoslovakia to fall into Russia's grasp.

There were also the Negroes. Once loyal followers of the GOP, in the 1930's they slipped largely over to the other party. This shift was due, in part, to the influence of a new leadership within the Negro community; in part, also, to the general identification of the cause of the "minorities" with New Deal liberalism; and in part it was due to the concrete relief that the Roosevelt administration had given to the people who had been the hardest hit of all Americans in the depression. Supplying the Democrats with an essential part of their majorities in New York City and Chicago, the Negroes came into this election year more conscious than ever before of their strength and of their grievances.

The Republicans showed considerable concern about winning back their allegiance. There was a substantial number of Negro delegates; and in the hearings before the credentials committee on the contested Mississippi delegation, the charge of Perry Howard, the colored national committeeman from that state, that his opposition was "lily-white" had much to do with securing him the victory. Nevertheless, what the Negroes really wanted they could not secure. They

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wanted a strong affirmative statement in the platform on civil rights; they got, instead, a vague set of platitudes.

They suffered this disappointment because the Republicans were then eager to eat into Democratic strength in another vital sector. The Dixiecrat revolt in 1948 had opened the wedge of hope that the GOP might at last crack the solid South. Four years of effective collaboration in Congress with the Southern diehards tinged that hope with probability. Certainly there was comfort in the declarations of Governor Byrnes of South Carolina and of Senator Byrd of Virginia that they were by no means committed to support the national Democratic candidates. Almost everywhere in the South the state parties had available machinery for placing a Republican on the ballot under the Democratic label or under that of some third party. The Republicans were not willing to jeopardize that possibility; their civil rights plank was weaker than in 1948, and Eisenhower's own statements on the subject were less satisfying than Dewey's four years earlier.

THE Democrats faced a different task; their problem was to hold the strength that was their legacy from the 1930's. The New Deal had established an effective coalition drawing together not only such traditionally Democratic groups as the Southerners and the Irish, but also the ethnic groups that regarded themselves as underprivileged—the Negroes, and the descendants of the newer immigrants.

Some of these groups offered no difficulty to the 1952 platform-makers. There was a plank on Israel for the Jews, another on the Katyn massacre for the Poles, and a general condemnation of Communist expansion for all those interested in the fate of Eastern and Central Europe. In addition, an excellent statement on immigration policy implicitly repudiated the McCarran-Walter Act. In any case, it was thought, the influence of the politically active unions might hold the loyalties of those groups among which they were particularly strong.

It was another matter with the Negroes. The platform of 1948 had made very definite promises, including one for a federal FEPC, that a Congress with a Democratic majority in both houses had failed to fulfill. Some delegates, among them Senators Humphrey and Moody, felt that those promises should be clearly reaffirmed and that, in addition, there ought to be some statement as to how those promises were to be implemented. On the eve of the convention there was talk of a plank in favor of a cloture rule to prevent filibustering in the Senate and of another calling for abrogation of the seniority provisions by which Southerners generally have acquired key committee positions. There was also talk of a federal anti-lynching law. It was time for a showdown, many thought, and if the Dixiecrats did not like it, they could clarify the situation by walking out.

In the thinking of the liberal wing, moreover, the civil rights question was intertwined with the more general one of party control. The representatives of the Americans for Democratic Action and some of the labor men realized that the same alliance that had killed FEPC had also killed the rest of the liberal program—blocked repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, for instance, and obstructed enactment of effective price controls. This was the opportunity to compel the Southerners to regularize their party position.

Yet the prospect of a Southern bolt pleased neither the administration nor the party leadership represented in the Democratic National Committee. Their objective was to win the election, not settle differences in ideology. And a victory in November depended upon the ability to hold together the discordant elements in the party. Guided by the master politician in the White House, they drove a course calculated to antagonize neither the Southerners nor the Northern liberals.

When the convention opened, the liberals were allowed to take the offensive. As a part of the temporary rules, Senator Moody introduced a "loyalty resolution" that committed every delegate personally to work,

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in his own state, to put the regularly nominated presidential candidate on the ballot under the Democratic designation. The tactic was aggressive; it was designed to display liberal strength, to foreshadow the conflict on civil rights, and, by forcing the Southerners to make their stand at the very start, either to deprive them of influence in the convention or close the door against any future bolt.

The Moody resolution was adopted over the bitter opposition of the South. The opponents of the loyalty pledge were weakened by the fact that Texas and Mississippi could not vote since their seats were contested. Furthermore, the Kefauver men from Maryland and Tennessee, casting about for extra strength, were anxious to placate the North. When the sessions of the first day closed, the liberals seemed clearly to be holding the upper hand.

THEREAFTER they were in steady retreat. The reversal may have been due to the naive assumption that, with the critical victory won, it was only necessary to placate the vanquished. It may have been due to unwillingness to take the onus of responsibility for defeat if the adamant Southerners bolted; the Democrats of Michigan or Minnesota could not feel as safely entrenched in state office as their fellows in the South. Or, the turn may have been due, as was commonly said, to assurances by the party leaders that if only some slight concessions were made, the Southerners would be forced to sign or get out.

In any case, the day after their great victory Senator Moody and Congressman Roosevelt appeared before the credentials committee and held forth the olive branch in the shape of a face-saving proviso that reduced the original loyalty pledge to innocuousness, as Jonathan Daniels, who had spoken for the Southerners the night before, gleefully pointed out. The proviso was accepted and the Dixiecrat delegations from Mississippi and Texas seated.

South Carolina, Virginia, and Louisiana still were obdurate. They would not sign. But they were not unseated. Their continued presence on the floor, despite the Moody resolution, cast a shadow across the deliberations of the platform committee, which was even then preparing the party statement of principles. Here, too, the liberals were more than conciliatory. They had not, as in 1948, to contend with a strong Republican platform and with the Wallaceites. With the aid of Senator Sparkman of Alabama they worked out a document vague enough to be accepted without debate and without a roll-call vote.

To minimize the extent of their humiliation, the liberals discovered unexpected virtues in the platform. Even Congressman Dawson, a Chicago Negro, swallowed it as workable. The approach of the election will multiply these alibis. But in two respects, the platform represented a clear liberal retreat. There was not a word about the filibuster or about the seniority system; the general reference to reform of Congressional procedures was offensive to no one. Furthermore, FEPC disappeared; the civil rights plank mentioned the possibility of future federal legislation but gave no indication of the immediate need for it. As a goal, the platform spoke only of "equal" opportunities; and "equal" is a term even Southerners accept so long as they can qualify it with, "separate but . . ." Whatever Northern liberals made of these phrases, to the Southerners they were harmless. Indeed in the peroration to his speech nominating Senator Russell, Senator George used almost identical language to describe the views of the candidate from Georgia.

By this time it was obvious, even to the liberals, that they had been outmaneuvered into a series of surprising defeats. That became clearer still later, when a bit of parliamentary sleight of hand, after all, seated the South Carolina, Virginia, and Louisiana delegations, although they still had not signed the pledge called for by the rules. At that stage, it became the tactic of the liberals to hold off the nomination of any candidate until they secured from him some sort of commitment as to his views.

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The question was Stevenson. All along the odds had been on Stevenson. Kefauver had earned the hostility of the President and of the party leadership; Russell was unacceptable to labor and to the Northern liberals just as Harriman was repugnant to the Southerners; and Barkley was in and out and in, but never more than a choice of desperation. Almost by elimination, the governor of Illinois was the likeliest candidate.

Stevenson's greatest strength lay in the fact that he was not a candidate and had not campaigned for the nomination. The other aspirants had been seared by public exposure; they had orated in primary contests and had answered ticklish questions on radio and television programs. On numberless occasions, they had taken stands on the critical divisive issues; it was clear, for instance, that Harriman was enthusiastically for FEPC, that Kefauver was reluctantly for it, and that Kerr and Russell were opposed to it.

But by virtue of the fact that he was not a candidate, Stevenson had been quit of the obligation of answering any questions, of taking any decisive stand. Whatever his personal reasons for abstaining, it was certainly fortuitous from the point of view of the party leadership seeking a neutral and therefore completely acceptable candidate.

It was precisely for that reason the liberals wished to salvage some measure of commitment from Stevenson. No doubt by now they were thinking of the vice-presidency and perhaps this was the basis of the short-lived alliance with Kefauver. Yet they had already lost the power to dictate, even to influence, terms. In the showdown, they could only go along, not alone with Stevenson, but also with Sparkman, a completely orthodox Southerner on civil rights.

As the campaign proceeds, those who believe in FEPC or in civil rights legislation in general will find little to choose between in the rival parties. Whatever public statements Eisenhower and Stevenson have thus far made show them both moderate believers that this is primarily an area for state action, or inaction.

It may be that the Republicans will decide the disgruntled Negroes a prize worth working for. Representative Powell, a colored delegate from Manhattan, the one abstainer when the New York delegation switched to Stevenson, has charged the Negroes "were sold down the river." A week after the convention, Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People declared that the Democrats had alienated three to five million Negro votes. Such considerations undoubtedly influenced the statement of Senator Lodge at the end of July, that the Republicans would make the effort to gather in the votes by future "clarifications" of Eisenhower's civil rights position. By the beginning of August, Senator Ives and other liberal Republicans were declaring a victory for them would hasten the enactment of a compulsory civil rights program.

On the other hand, the GOP may still be lusting after the Dixiecrats. Despite the evidence of Democratic solidarity in the Stevenson-Sparkman ticket, the hope will not die that such states as Texas, South Carolina, and Florida may swing to Ike. A stronger civil rights stand would kill that hope. Indeed, the Mississippi states'-righters under former Lieutenant Governor Lumpkin, tendering their support to Eisenhower, demanded as their price the removal of Perry Howard, Negro national committeeman from that state.

Similar pressures, together with Stevenson's own conservatism, are likely also to immobilize the Democrats. Whatever the outcome, the forces that have blocked civil rights legislation in the past will not have been weakened in the least. With either Sparkman or Nixon presiding over the Senate, in fact, the old Dixiecrat-Republican coalition in Congress will be stronger than ever. The whole story of these political maneuvers proves again what Franklin Roosevelt had realized in 1944, that present party alignment stands in the way of realization of a consistent liberal program.

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That may be a good thing. Talking the day the Democratic convention adjourned, an old New Deal Brain Truster, once in the forefront of this fight but now retired—and tired—expressed satisfaction with the outcome. The parties, in his view, are instruments of compromise, their function to avoid head-on ideological conflicts. To have held the Dixiecrats loyal, he thought, was a major achievement; and, if civil rights legislation has to wait in consequence, why the improvement of conditions will come about gradually through the operations of non-legislative forces which will not do violence to existing attitudes.

This viewpoint, however, rests upon two unwarranted assumptions: that, left alone, conditions will of themselves grow better, and that existing attitudes will remain stable, awaiting such improvement. Unfortunately there are grounds for the fear that conditions will deteriorate as well as for the hope that they will improve. What is more, in our society attitudes do not exist, they become; and in a period of rapid change, when men are confused and seek direction, what those attitudes become may depend upon the clarity and vigor with which we express our ideals in law. The failure of the conventions was a failure to supply the guides that could direct the changes of the future into desirable and constructive channels.

To understand the extent of that failure it is necessary to move outside the hall and regard the streets, even now everywhere in process of transformation.

In its true perspectives, the problem is not North *against* South; the problem is North *and* South.

In the South, ancient antagonisms have left their ubiquitous marks. Its history has left the section implacably divided, white against black. Memories preserve that division—of the shamefulness of holding or being held a slave, of the injuries of oppressing or being oppressed, of the injustice of denying or being denied rights. These long recollections cover periods in which relationships grow better, but also in which they grow worse. Now, a complete pattern of segregation is the outward sign of the separateness of the two races and of the inferiority of the black to the white.

There have been recent changes. At first it was the influence of outsiders, Northern Negroes and whites, who interceded to secure the minimal rights of men for the colored people of the South. Then it was indigenous leadership of professional and business folk that began to fight for the privileges due them. Then the two world wars came and brought to many Negroes an awareness of their stake in this society. And through it all, the progressive industrialization of the region unsettled all its residents of whatever complexion, broke the force of old habits, rendered custom anachronistic, and raised the troubling question as to the shape of life in the future.

Indeed, the South has changed. More than ever the Negroes vote, even in Democratic primaries. They have found their way into state universities. Wide ranges of new employment have been opened to them.

They are not, however, grateful for these "concessions." Discontent feeds on them—as it should. The Negro who finds Jim Crow disappearing on interstate trains sees no reason why it should persist in local transportation. If the black man is admitted to the University of Texas law school, he will wish his child to attend the superior white elementary school. Those who learn to use the ballot will come to aspire to hold office. As the number of lynchings decline and the old fears vanish, the timid "Uncle Toms" lose their influence and new aggressive voices demand as rights what yesterday were not even dreams. It is unthinkable that these people, just awakening to the consciousness of their own dignity as human beings, should long continue to accept the status to which the Dixiecrats would consign them. Nor will they, for the sake of party unity, wait for the matter to work itself out.

The dominant whites in the South, having resisted the concessions of the past, lack the means of accepting the inevitable

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changes of the future. The old plantation recedes rapidly in a landscape over which the blast furnace looms. But the images of the past block out the possibility of a new vision.

In the North it was always different. Not that the Negro had it much easier there; but there he did not find the rigid line of demarcation between white and black. There too, however, the situation is without stability.

In the North, the Negroes were one among many ethnic groups. They found themselves in a society that took cognizance of the variety of its members, the differences based on religion and national origin as well as upon color. Almost everywhere, it was true, those differences entailed inequalities of opportunity. Thirty years ago affiliation with a group that was white and Protestant undoubtedly brought with it substantial advantages in the ability to acquire an education, enter numerous professions, choose a home in a desirable neighborhood. And almost everywhere in the North, the Negroes were the least privileged, the lowest in the preference order among all ethnic groups.

But they were not alone. They were not completely isolated by their color: they could make common cause with the Jews, Italians, and others, also discriminated against. All these groups had come to think of themselves as "minorities," underprivileged and engaged in a joint struggle for equality of rights.

For all these groups the 1930's had been the decisive turning point. By then the immigrants, acquiescent and uncertain of their own status, had given way to their children of the second generation, aggressively eager to enter upon their heritage as Americans and resentful of artificial barriers in their way. Through the Democratic party they had access to political power. From the New Deal they acquired an ideology that justified government intervention on behalf of human rights. Across the sea, in the mounting tide of Hitlerism, they could see the ultimate logic of racism. The war summoned up their energies and also gave them the slogans of freedom. Thereafter their demands could no longer be put off.

The civil rights measures embodied both practical reforms and an abstract protest. The "minorities" struggled for fair employment and educational practices because they wished their children to find places in banks and medical schools and also because they resented the imputation that they must accept an inferior place in American life. On both counts, the objectives of their struggle were phrased in general terms, in terms of the right of *all* Americans to equality of opportunity. That established an identity of interest among them all, black as well as white. In New York State, Negroes, Jews, and Italians all participated in the effort to secure enactment of a fair employment practices law. In Massachusetts, where the number of Negroes was relatively small, the brunt of the battle was borne by Jews and Irishmen; but the gains of the law extended to cover colored people as well. By analogy with their own condition, the white "minorities" of the North, though not threatened with lynchings or with deprivation of political rights, could nevertheless find a basis for sharing the fears of the Southern Negroes who were so threatened. The struggle for his own incomplete rights endowed the New York Jew or the Boston Irishman with the beginnings of understanding of what it meant to be as totally devoid of rights as was the Georgia Negro.

But as in the South, so in the North, too, changes have come. In the Democratic party of the North, the Irish and Negroes and Jews, in many places, have had to make room for a restless element, traditionally affiliated with the party, but new to these areas. The internal migrations of the last thirty years have carried many Southerners across the Mason-Dixon line. The pull of opportunity has drawn the sons of white farmers out of the old eroded hills, away from the uplands where there was no future but only a past. The memories of that past linger in the factories of Detroit and Los Angeles; and

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many among such migrants see the shape of the great demon of that past in the figure of the black man who passes them in the street. Here is a dark pool of prejudice, stagnant, not yet in motion; only an occasional riot shows its potential for destruction if it should ever overflow. The Southerners in these cities grow in numbers; albeit, half-strangers, they are slow to use their influence.

Other changes come with lesser moves. The immigrants sought equality for their children's sake; the children, enjoying equality, value it less. Or perhaps, having gained some measure of equality, they wish also to have recognized signs of respectability and status. Thirteen years of prosperity have made some of them thriving businessmen; liberalized educational practices have opened a way for others into the professions; still others hold public office; and others are well-paid technicians. Now their thoughts run to the nice house in the nice neighborhood. Successful, they want the rewards of success and among these is the sense of being accepted by other successful people.

There are standards as to how a doctor, a judge, a foreman should live—what kind of house or car to own, what club to join, what paper to read. Conformity is the cost of being taken in. Yet in a period of rising prices and of shortages it is more difficult to acquire than to inherit these symbols of status. The move to the suburb is achieved with hardship, or is delayed indefinitely.

That is itself irksome. And what if the mass of Negroes crowding the periphery of the respectable neighborhoods should now break in, violate the Drive, or Boulevard, or Parkway, and put to nought all the efforts of having got there! It is tempting to fall back in self-defense upon the devices of exclusion; all too often in America the way to belonging has been to draw a line leaving "the others" out. So, in Cicero, in Detroit, and in other areas of housing tension, the second-generation descendants of immigrants have been prominent in restrictive activity against Negroes.

It is true, for most of these ethnic groups their own past as the restricted and the excluded is not so far behind them that they can put out of mind the evils of those measures or the gains they themselves made in fighting them. But these are among the least secure elements in our society and they may more often in the future seek to forget they were once among the "minorities" and prefer instead a place within the "majority." It may then seem that the easiest way to escape the ranks of the oppressed is to join those of the oppressors. Whether they do so or not is likely to depend on their calculation of what our society regards as proper.

The likeness among all these people is the reflection of doubts that agitate men unsure of their way and distrustful of each other. Under these circumstances it is foolhardy to rely upon the inevitability of improvement. Can we discount the possibility that while we wait the Negro may be isolated and left to fight alone against overwhelming odds? May not those people who are now confused take our failure to speak out for civil rights legislation as a sign that we do not really believe in civil rights?

IT IS time to ask again, what are these civil rights?

We see them framed in laws or enunciated in party platforms. To the practical man of politics they win over, or alienate, so many votes, swing this section or that. To the "realist," they are phrases of little intrinsic consequence; any high school civics student knows that platforms have no binding force, that promises are always disregarded after the election, and that laws alone cannot alter the "folkways" of a people. To every small-size Machiavelli these are merely slogans, useful or not, according to some calculation of advantage.

We see them also, however, as aspirations intimately involved with the historic meaning of America as an open society, unlimited by status, with opportunity accessible to every man. From this perspective, a civil rights law or party platform is a statement of fundamental principles, affirmed in terms that the people can comprehend.

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What is the value of such an affirmation?

Even were that affirmation to have no other effect than that of a gesture, it would still be valuable—just as a Fourth of July oration is valuable, or a prayer. It would be valuable as a public declaration of faith in the ideals our society cherishes. As such it would help give direction to millions of men confused by the uncertainties and doubts of their own changing situations.

I do not believe that white Southerners, hardened by more than a century of bitterness, would thereby at once be persuaded. But neither do I believe that these Americans, habituated as they are to a decent respect for the opinions of mankind, could fail in time to respond to this definition of the American creed. Unsettled, whether they have stayed at home or gone to the North, they surely face experiences that will shake accepted beliefs and crack encrusted customs; and they will surely be affected as they change by what their countrymen think right.

For the hesitant Czech-American in Cicero or the Jew in Los Angeles a statement affirming the right would be more illuminating still. Most of all now these people want the respectability of conforming to what is American. Their hesitation arises from their having mistaken for American the restrictions and exclusions that were once applied against them. They need the affirmation that it was their own earlier struggle for rights that was truly American, and that that struggle will not be wholly won until the victory covers the whole of society.

Most of all, the Negroes need such an affirmation. The danger is real that they will be isolated and come to think themselves isolated, that they will begin to believe the color line exists ineradicably to divide our society into we and they. They need the reassurance that we do not count the battle over because some of us already enjoy the fruits of victory.

The true failure of the conventions was the failure to deliver a clear affirmation on civil rights. Juggling with the favor of one group as against another, and maneuvering toward the tolerable compromise, the politicians equivocated and lost sight of principle. Whatever explanations, emendations, or additions may be offered before November will be tainted by the suspicion they are simply new tricks in the same old game. What the consequences will be, we cannot yet tell. We can only mourn the lost opportunity.

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PROGRESS WITHOUT FEDERAL COMPULSION

Arguing the Case for Compromise Methods

HERBERT R. NORTHRUP

THE result of the fight over civil rights at both conventions was a platform which seems to half-satisfy most of the proponents as well as most of the opponents of a strong FEPC. In effect, both parties agreed to defer the working out of their internal cleavages on this difficult subject until after the election. But we can already see what the effect of the renewed combat will be.

On the Democratic side, Senators Humphrey and Lehman have made clear their intention to fight on for a compulsory FEPC; and there is no question of the determination of the Southern bloc to fight against it furiously and, with their Republican allies, successfully. It was the late Senator Wherry, Republican of Nebraska, backed by his prairie and Rocky Mountain colleagues, who devised the Senate rule which requires sixty-four Senators to break a filibuster, and which insures the South's success. If and when FEPC again comes to the Senate floor, it seems a safe bet that the Republicans from the wide open spaces will again provide the Southern Democrats with the votes they need to beat cloture. On the other side will stand, ranged alongside the Northern and Pacific Coast Democrats, their Republican colleagues from the same regions.

Why, however, have our politicians, ordinarily so well schooled in the art of compromise, been unable to come up with any legislative solution to the civil rights question? We have seen an open compromise on this question placed outside the pale of polite discussion. Political leaders on both sides seem to have taken up the belief that the search for and support of measures less than the maximum would be more fatal than vague platform abstractions that can only insure the continuance of an ever more bitter deadlock. But is this really true?

Thanks to the zeal of both proponents and opponents of FEPC, the purpose of fair employment practices legislation has been in good measure forgotten and the fight is over a method. Compromises which might bring the purpose nearer by some different method are summarily rejected by advocates of FEPC even before opponents have a chance to declare themselves. And to cap the unhappy situation, the experience of the states having compulsory fair employment practices legislation indicates that we must learn a great deal more about the favored method before we can say that this is the only way to realize the purpose of fair employment legislation.

FLUSHED by the victory of President Truman in the 1948 elections, minority and labor groups descended on Washington in January 1949 demanding a compulsory FEPC and repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act. The atmosphere was excellent for achieving a good portion of both objectives. What seems in retrospect to have been needed was a willingness to compromise on methods. But neither the leaders of labor nor those of the minority groups were in a mood to consider any compromise—until it was too late.

HERBERT R. NORTHRUP was a consultant to the wartime Fair Employment Practices Committee, and in his book *Organized Labor and the Negro* (1944) he was one of the first to call for a permanent, compulsory FEPC. Here he subjects to analysis, in the light of past experience and practical possibilities, the liberal zeal for a specific method of achieving non-discriminatory employment which, some fear, sacrifices the better to the best. Mr. Northrup is co-author of *The Economics of Labor and Industrial Relations* (1950); he is now a labor-relations consultant in New York City.

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Thanks to labor's intransigent stand, Taft-Hartley appears here to stay in a virtually unaltered form. And thanks to the equally intransigent stand of the proponents of civil rights legislation, that issue was also shoved up a blind alley.

Moderates in the cause of civil rights wanted to push action on federal anti-poll tax and anti-lynching legislation, both of which had an excellent chance of passage. In the course of this fight, it was hoped that a coalition could be formed among liberal members of the Senate to insure at least some steps toward the adoption of an FEPC program—perhaps an educational or voluntary program at first, in order to allay Southern opposition and suspicion, and to pave the way for a program with teeth.

To this program, some groups took strong exception, and under their leadership the proponents of a compulsory FEPC took an all or nothing attitude. Meanwhile, however, the conservatives in both parties were recovering from the sting of the previous November's defeat. Under the slogan "the people did not vote for socialism," the late Senator Wherry, Republican whip in the Senate, used the Southern filibuster against FEPC to forge and cement the Southern Democrat-Republican coalition. This killed all chances for a civil rights or any other liberal program in the remainder of President Truman's administration. It may well have extended the conservative veto into the future. For it resulted in the adoption of a cloture rule whereby, as Senator Paul Douglas pointed out, the Senators representing "a combination of the seventeen smaller states, with less than 8 per cent . . . of the population . . . can tie up the Senate and the country and defeat the will of over 90 per cent of the people."

"WHAT do you mean, compromise?" FEPC's backers might well ask. "Would not compromise mean elimination of compulsion, and would that not make FEPC worthless?" These questions go to the heart of the matter.

The compromise most frequently advanced stems from a proposal by Representative Brooks Hays, Democrat of Arkansas. Early in 1948, Hays proposed an advisory civil rights agency in the Department of Labor which would take the lead in assisting state officials to eliminate all discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin. The Hays measure would enunciate a strong pro-civil rights policy. It would, however, be without any enforcement provisions.

The leader of the Southern bloc, Senator Richard Russell, has stated that he would be willing to accept something along the lines of the Hays proposal, provided it included provisions for voluntary action on discrimination against the aged and against women. This chivalrous proposal should certainly be accepted at face value. No harm can come from assisting these populous groups. Massachusetts has already amended its compulsory FEPC law to forbid employment discrimination against older workers, and Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and Washington all have both compulsory FEPC legislation and laws which prohibit discrimination in rate of pay because of sex. And in any case, the way the agency was conducted—regardless of its powers—would depend on who was appointed to it, and with an administration committed to action in civil rights, we might expect appointments that would not subordinate discrimination on account of race and national origin to other types of discrimination.

For a voluntary program to do a real job in furthering fair employment practice, however, it must provide for three basic functions: (1) public hearings with the right to subpoena witnesses and to publish findings and recommendations; (2) public information and education aimed at informing citizens of the concept and meaning of fair employment practice; and (3) basic studies of racial, religious, and national origin employment patterns and trends, and of the methods of improving job opportunities for minority group workers.

Each of these powers rivals compulsion in importance. The first would, in effect, give a voluntary program all powers but the right

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to go to a court and ask for an order enforcing its recommendations. In many areas, including the most important ones outside of the South, most businesses could ill afford the unfavorable publicity which would result from a public hearing and finding of discrimination. The fear of formal or informal boycotts by members of the affected groups often makes publicity equal in effect to court orders. Even in many parts of the South, publicity would be at least no asset.

We have seen the effects of public hearings in those states having FEPC laws. Invariably the employer will deny guilt and proclaim his company completely innocent of discrimination. Frequently, these denials are made in the honest belief that no discrimination has taken place. Yet the mere mention of a public hearing almost invariably is sufficient to bring redress to the individual complainant and promises from the company to comply with the law strictly in the future.

Let it be emphasized that this submission does not come about because the employer is fearful of being found guilty of discrimination *but primarily because the employer knows that win, lose, or draw, he is likely to get a black eye in the public mind which can do his business no good.* To draw an apt, if unhappy comparison, the employer publicly accused of discrimination has as hard a time proving his innocence in the court of public opinion as has the individual who is publicly charged with Communist sympathies by a Congressional committee.

THE second function—information and publicity—is also important. Hodding Carter, the distinguished liberal publisher of Greenville, Mississippi, has declared that 999 of every 1,000 Mississippians are so strongly against FEPC that the threat of such legislation always insures the election of a Bilbo, an Eastland, or a Rankin. But do Mississippians, or any Southerners, really know what FEPC is all about? As Malcolm Ross, chairman of the wartime agency pointed out, there never has been a dispassionate pro-and-con debate on FEPC in Mississippi, or for that matter, probably in any Southern community. A Rankin, or even a Byrnes, does not have to give a rational basis for opposing FEPC, and can make the most outrageous misstatements against it—adding to the vehemence with which it is opposed.

Here is where the public information and education arm of a non-compulsory fair employment agency could really serve a magnificent purpose. For the first time, a serious effort could be made to give the facts about FEPC—including the simple truths that the only purpose of FEPC is to promote employment on the basis of merit only and that FEPC is most emphatically not aimed at taking away anybody's job or seniority.

The information job would of course be most difficult in the South, but even where the initial resistance is lower, information would still have an important function. A direct test of FEPC's appeal to the voters came in 1946 in California, and the proposal for a compulsory state law won the support of only 30 per cent of the voters. Although some of the opposition votes were blamed on the "kiss of death" support of Harry Bridges and other pro-Communist elements, Samuel Lubell has demonstrated that the California proposal was defeated by a combination of upper- and middle-income Republicans and Democrats of "old American" and Irish background. Significantly, an examination of the campaign literature reveals much heat and emotion (from both sides), but little enlightenment about what FEPC really means. Certainly there is a good deal of work to be done with the 70 per cent who voted against FEPC.

Part of this educational job would be to explain to the business community—which tends to oppose civil rights legislation affecting business—that there is no real threat to it in this kind of legislation. It was this kind of opposition that led the voters of Portland, Oregon, a liberal community, to defeat in 1950 by a vote of 74,444 to 61,058 an ordinance which would have outlawed discrimination in places of public accommodation. Similar measures passed by state legislatures would have had equally tough sledding in a referendum. In short, educational informa-

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tion about civil rights legislation is needed all over the country. To develop that information through a voluntary FEPC agency could assist materially in smoothing the path of any compulsory program which might be adopted at a later date.

A special but no less important educational function which can be performed under a voluntary program is to reeducate employment managers, personnel recruiters, and vocational-guidance directors. The aim would be to eliminate stereotyped employment and job preparation. People still hire by racial type; guidance directors still advise minorities not to train for jobs where there is discrimination; and in this way the vicious circle of no training because no jobs, and no jobs because no training, is perpetuated. And unless the potential skills are available, FEPC cannot open up jobs.

THE third basic function for a workable voluntary program has an importance beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge as to patterns of employment. Besides actually needing much more information on basic employment trends, we also need to know how to make FEPC work. This statement may be sheer heresy to those who believe either that existing state laws are well-oiled functioning mechanisms, or that a compulsory federal FEPC would have no problems except those caused by recalcitrant employers or unions. Nevertheless, the existing state laws have not accomplished quite the revolution in employment patterns that their sponsors hoped for in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Let us consider the situation in New York, where the political, social, ethnic, and religious climate is most favorable and where a fair employment practice law has been in force longest.

In 1949, the New York State Commission Against Discrimination received 315 "verified complaints." This is the largest number which SCAD has ever received in a single year; the average number of verified complaints for the previous three and one-half years of SCAD's existence was approximately 275. In 1950, verified complaints dropped to 257; in 1951, their total number was 243.

These statistics do not by any means tell the whole story of SCAD's operations. One case may, for example, involve the employment patterns of an entire industry; another case may represent the grievance of only one individual. Nevertheless, these figures do raise two fundamental and related questions: Why are the number of complaints so small? Why are they declining? SCAD's answer to at least the second question, as suggested in its 1951 annual report:

"Discrimination still exists. Deeply embedded practices of job discrimination are not readily and permanently changed. . . . However, the record of New York State . . . indicates that second-class job status for individuals because of their race, creed, color, or national origin has been considerably reduced."

What has happened, in effect, is that SCAD is now down to the hard core of discriminatory employment patterns. For example, SCAD can take credit for a good job of improving minority group employment in many New York shops and department stores. But the fancy Fifth Avenue shops and stores have not noticeably changed their employment patterns. In fact, it is generally where one expects to find the "deeply embedded practices of job discrimination" that the SCAD report speaks of that it has been least effective; the railroads, the airlines, the financial district and financial institutions are a few examples.

With discrimination declining in areas more flexible and open to change, workers in minority groups tend to aim at such places to find employment. Like all workers, they prefer jobs to insults, or a runaround, or legal action. So that after a first flush of success in areas relatively easy to crack, SCAD is now left with the job of taking over the tougher areas; and here, because of insufficient complaints or greater ability of these employers to resist public pressure, it also has the job of devising new techniques.

THIS explains why the number of complaints to SCAD have been declining.

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It does not explain why the number is so low in the first place, and why no—or few—complaints come from areas where we know a discriminatory pattern of employment is entrenched. To overcome this difficulty, two kinds of measures are necessary (as I pointed out in an article in COMMENTARY in December 1947): (1) a broad public information program, and (2) the integration of vocational guidance with fair employment.

SCAD itself has repeatedly stressed these objectives. For example, part of its educational program is to encourage young people to train for jobs in accordance with their aptitudes and without considering past discrimination. The commission's educational services, films, radio programs, speakers, etc., give practical aid to vocational-guidance counselors along the same lines. In addition to the work with counselors, these projects reach school administrators, teachers, employer groups, and community agencies—in other words, the various forces which influence young people in their career selection, to the end that fear of discrimination will be eliminated as a factor in that section.

Nor has SCAD limited its educational work to prospective employees. It has established contacts with foremen, and set up shop-steward training programs. At the Republic Aviation Corporation in Farmingdale, Long Island, SCAD conducted a week-long intensive training session. On another occasion SCAD's educational program was featured at a dinner meeting of shop stewards of all unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

Despite SCAD's progress in getting at the grass roots, the hard core of discrimination remains largely unbroken in the employment field, partly because it takes years before these teachings can achieve their full impact in the labor market. New ideas, fairer ideas, take time to permeate through our economic system. But if this is so, an educational program is in a very organic sense a necessary forerunner to fair employment practices.

Perhaps even more important than the slowness of educational measures has been the failure of the proponents of compulsory FEPC to develop a mechanism to get cases to the state commissions. What is needed is an organization to play a similar role to that played by labor unions in handling unfair labor practice cases. Although FEPC legislation has been modeled on labor relations legislation, the significant role of the union in the success of labor laws has been neglected. Nearly all unfair labor practices charges are taken up by unions for their members, but no similar organizations exists to handle racial or other discrimination cases in the province of fair employment laws. In my 1947 article I wrote:

"It may not be farfetched to declare that FEPC's proponents should give as much thought and energy to this proposal [for an organization especially designed to aid complainants in reaching the commission] as to the legislation itself. An FEPC program faces strangulation unless the gulf between its administrators and those discriminated against can be fully bridged."

"Strangulation," to be sure, has not set in. But until this organization is developed, FEPC legislation is not likely to achieve its full purpose.

IN THE first two years of its operations, SCAD made real and noticeable progress. Since 1948, its progress has been at a much slower pace. Instead of demanding FEPC at the cost of consigning the liberal coalition to becoming an ineffective minority, is it not intelligent to settle for something less and in the meantime add to our knowledge as to how we can most effectively use legal measures to eliminate discrimination in employment? All this is no argument to scuttle the state laws that we have. To crack "deeply embedded practices of job discrimination," we will probably need both "know-how" and compulsion. But it is highly likely that the more flexible employment patterns can be cracked without compulsion, and in the meantime, the educational process can do much to smooth the path for stronger legislation, which today, like the Volstead Act, might fail on a national scale because of widespread indifference and resentment.

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The workability of any voluntary FEPC program is, of course, subject to question. Certainly, one's ability to settle cases of alleged discrimination by conciliation are stronger if enforcement power is in the background; hence it is no argument in favor of the possible effectiveness of a voluntary program to point to the fact that compulsion is very rarely resorted to, even when written into law. Public hearings and recommendations are, however, far from powerless as an incentive to a conciliation settlement.

Critics of experimenting with a voluntary approach argue that Wisconsin and Indiana have had voluntary programs which have not been conspicuously successful in either improving job opportunities or in educating the public to the needs of a compulsory program. Indeed, it has been charged that state laws like these are used to bury FEPC, not to promote it.

Now this, of course, could happen. A voluntary program might be a pious fraud instead of a genuine forward step. But certainly it need not—it would depend, as we said earlier, on the nature of the act and its administration. Connecticut tried a voluntary program first, then switched to compulsion, and the same thing occurred in Cleveland. Professor John Davis, of Lincoln University, writing in the July *Fortune*, cites Cleveland as the classic example of the failure of a voluntary program, but if so it was certainly a very qualified failure. For Professor Davis's article points out that Cleveland's voluntary approach did accomplish one important thing: it showed Cleveland industry that it had nothing to fear from fair employment practice, and as a result Cleveland industry was persuaded to cooperate with a stronger compulsory program. This "failure" thus resulted in achieving Professor Davis's objective of compulsion rather smoothly and without arousing bitterness and intransigence. And it should also be noted that a study of the "ineffective" voluntary Cleveland program in December 1949 by the National Industrial Conference Board showed that as a result of its operations many people had secured jobs that would have been closed to them if this interim period had been spent in a battle over the pros and cons of voluntarism and compulsion.

Obviously, a voluntary federal program could be made to serve or to hinder the cause of fair employment. It would be up to those favoring the principle to see that the latter did not happen and the last-ditch opponents would, I think, need more votes than they now have to starve a voluntary program to death—unless the proponents of fair employment were too busy promoting compulsion to care about preventing that fate.

In a real sense, however, the merits of voluntary vs. compulsory programs is not at stake on the federal scene. What is at stake is the maximum progress toward genuine fair employment. To all but the most unrealistic optimist, there is little chance of any immediate Congressional enactment of compulsory FEPC legislation. The real choice is whether to continue fighting against an opposition that solidifies with every blow, and thus get nowhere; or to accept a compromise on the way toward the basic goal.

If compromise is rejected, we may see this present era of full employment pass by without the setting up of any governmental machinery to protect minority-group job rights when lay-offs occur and job opportunities become scarce. If, on the other hand, compromise is accepted, a vehicle will be available that can at least carry the message of fair employment throughout the country, on a permanent, day-to-day basis; studies of racial- and national-origin employment trends can be made on a scale hitherto impossible; and the means of getting aggrieved persons to press cases may be learned. And if, as we believe, the great majority of Americans really are in favor of equality of job opportunity, our experience will lead us eventually to the adoption of the best method of insuring it.

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THE JEWISH PURGE IN THE SATELLITE COUNTRIES

Behind the Communist Turn to Anti-Semitism

PETER MEYER

WHEN Rudolf Slansky, the Secretary General of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia, was removed from his post in September 1951, and arrested on charges of treason ten weeks later, many people wondered if this was the beginning of a general purge of Jews in the satellite countries. In May 1952, a second prominent Communist leader of Jewish origin, Ana Pauker of Rumania, shared Slansky's fate: she was first removed from party office, and then from her post as Foreign Minister. In the meantime, it was discovered that almost every Czechoslovak Jew of prominence, whether in Slansky's circle or outside it, whether in the party or in the government, had been demoted, expelled from the party, or arrested. In Rumania, the same process started after Ana Pauker's fall. Concurrently, a distinct note of anti-Semitism began to creep into official statements and press articles in the satellite countries. The long-sustained witch hunt against "Zionists" and "cosmopolitans" was now accompanied by rather open hints that Jews were apt to spread subversive infections. And behind the smoke screen of this propaganda, mass deportations of "bourgeois," "parasitic," "unreliable," and "alien" elements, among them a great and disproportionate number of Jews, were conducted in the cities of Hungary, Rumania, and Slovakia.

Equality of citizenship irrespective of race, religion, or ethnic origin is still "guaranteed" by the satellite constitutions. Anti-Semitism and racist propaganda are still banned by the penal codes. Prominent Communists of Jewish origin still hold offices in Hungary and Poland. But the general trend is unmistakable; and if we had any doubts, they would be overcome by the fact that what is now happening in the satellite states only follows the pattern already established in the Soviet Union. The Jews of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Poland are again an "alien," suspect group, condemned to the role of scapegoats for the failures and crimes of a totalitarian regime. Those Budapest deportees who sewed on yellow stars when ordered by the Communist authorities to appear for "relocation" instinctively grasped the similarity between the two totalitarian regimes.

OF COURSE, the new wave of purges and arrests which is sweeping the satellite countries has many and complex causes, and the emergence of anti-Semitism is only one of its aspects. The process of Sovietization, which involves the transformation of the economies of the satellite countries to fit Russian needs and which requires the lowering of living standards to the Soviet level, has met a mute but persistent passive resistance.

IT TAKES an effort of the imagination to realize that only a few short years ago a major issue of debate in Jewish life was whether it was wiser for the Jews of East Europe to maintain and strengthen their communal and economic institutions or to emigrate to new countries. Today these institutions, painfully rebuilt after the war with American relief funds, no longer exist in the fanatical climate of East Europe; and the issue has become the starker one of whether Jews can physically survive in those countries. PETER MEYER here analyzes the latest threats to Jewish existence in Eastern Europe, particularly Czechoslovakia, where many utterly loyal Communists of Jewish descent have been charged with being "Zionists" in the service of "Western imperialists," and are now awaiting trial on these absurd charges. Mr. Meyer has written widely on developments in Eastern Europe and Russia; his most recent article in COMMENTARY, "The Driving Force Behind Soviet Imperialism," appeared in March 1952.

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The peasants have resisted complete collectivization, and their reluctance to produce and deliver at state-dictated prices has caused high costs of living and a scarcity of food in countries which were once called the breadbaskets of Central Europe. Still more dangerous is the passive resistance of industrial workers, expressed in low output, the poor quality of production, and, in the second half of 1951, in a series of wildcat strikes which were severely suppressed but which alarmed the local Communist authorities and their Soviet supervisors. More and more, the newspapers and the speeches of Communist leaders complained about the underfulfilment of plans, low productivity, the low morale of the labor force, the passivity of local party and union units.

The native Communist bureaucracy, forced to increase exploitation for Russian benefit but faced with an increasing resistance by the population, was again confronted by the basic dilemma of satellite Europe: to give in to popular pressure and try to reduce Soviet demands meant to be accused of "opportunism" and "nationalism"; to increase exploitation in accordance with Russian wishes meant to disorganize the economy and risk punishment for inefficiency. A series of reorganizations of the administrative and economic set-up were attempted but did not solve the problem.

The way out was to find scapegoats who could be made responsible—to the Russians—for inefficiency and—to the native populations—for increased exploitation and the excesses of terror. In order to calm the native population, the scapegoats had to be accused of economic sabotage, corruption, terroristic methods, and offenses against "proletarian democracy"; while to conform to Soviet ritualistic formulas, they had to be charged also with capitulation before the capitalists and kulaks, with nationalism and Titoism. And of course, they also had to be spies and assassins in the service of Western imperialism.

A PURGE of "nationalists," "Titoists," and "Western agents" had been going on in the satellite countries since the defection of Tito in 1948. Its main victims had been, up to 1951, men with domestic roots and nationalist leanings, who could with some reason be suspected of striving for greater independence from Russia. Wladislaw Gomulka in Poland, Laszlo Rajk in Hungary, Traicho Kostov in Bulgaria were such men, with a certain independence of mind and strong characters. They had been the organizers of domestic resistance under the Nazis and still enjoyed some popularity among the people. They were liquidated because Moscow was afraid that they might attempt to become the imitators of Tito.

But in 1951 the direction of the purge suddenly changed. The men who were now being denounced and liquidated were of a quite different breed: they were the "Muscovites," men who had been known for years as the faithful hatchet men of Moscow. They were not popular leaders but rather obscure *apparatchiki;* their high positions were not due to any domestic popularity but to their career in the Moscow-dominated party machine. It now looked as if Stalin was rewarding with liquidation his most humble and obedient servants.

Nowhere was the trend reversed more dramatically than in Czechoslovakia. In that country, the purge of deviant Communists had started later than in the other satellite states and not without public prompting from the outside. It was certainly strange when, in the public trial of Laszlo Rajk in Budapest in September 1949, some defendants "confessed" that a widespread and powerful Titoist conspiracy existed in Czechoslovakia—while the Prague authorities seemed to know nothing about it. But, of course, they understood the hint and soon afterwards the Czechoslovak purge started in earnest.

At the beginning, its most conspicuous victims were men with Czech or Slovak nationalist leanings. Foreign Minister Vlado Clementis, demoted in March 1950, and arrested several months later, had opposed the Soviet-Nazi pact and collaborated, although on party orders, with President Benes in London. The chairman of the Foreign Af-

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fairs Committee of the parliament and editor of the central party organ, Vilem Novy, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, Evzen Loebl, the officials of the Foreign and Information Ministries, Arthur London, Evzen Klinger, Stanislav Budin—these and others had lived in Western countries during the war and could be charged with being infected by Western ideas. All of them were old friends of President Klement Gottwald, and informed observers considered their purge a preparation for his downfall. Many of them were Jews, but this fact was not stressed in any way at that time. Their Western sympathies were ascribed to their Czech or Slovak "nationalism"—not to the euphemistic "cosmopolitanism."

But at the beginning of 1951, the situation suddenly changed. Clementis had already been in jail for some time, and at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist party in February, his case was reported on. But the report was delivered by the local secretary of the party in Slovakia and the case treated as a matter of secondary importance. A new and much more sensational conspiracy had been "uncovered," this time not in government offices, not in the entourage of President Gottwald, but in the central secretariat of the party, among the closest collaborators of Rudolf Slansky. Slansky himself was not charged with any complicity; rather, it was alleged, it was under the cover of his "prolonged illness" that the conspirators had conducted their work. The main villains were Otto Sling, the party secretary in Brno, and his lady friend Marie Svermova, Slansky's deputy in the party headquarters. Sling was accused of being an Anglo-American spy, and the conspirators were charged with putting their people in high party positions throughout the country in order to prepare a coup against Gottwald. It was significant that Slansky, still Secretary General and present at the proceedings, was not allowed to report on the purge. He merely observed while his aides were demoted and jailed.

IT WAS at this stage that the anti-Semitic note appeared. It expressed itself in the selection of the victims as well as in the choice of the accuser. Otto Sling was a Jew, and his father had been a manufacturer in the German-speaking town of Teplice. His alleged co-conspirators were Vitezslav Fuchs, the district party secretary in Moravska Ostrava, Hanus Lomsky-Lieben, the district secretary in Plzen, Ruzena Dubova, a party secretary in Brno, Ervin Polak, Deputy Minister of the Interior, Bedrich Reycin, the head of army intelligence, all of whom were known to be of Jewish origin. (The fact that Ostrava, Plzen, and Brno were the places where the workers' passive resistance was strongest and where strikes had occurred, left little doubt that the intention was to find suitable scapegoats, for the populace as well as for the Russians.)

Vaclav Kopecky, the Minister of Information, was the accuser. He was the man who had referred, as early as 1947, to the Jewish refugees from Carpatho-Russia as "scum" and "those bearded Solomons." In his presentation, he told the Central Committee that Sling was a "cosmopolitan," that he had no roots in the Czech nation, that he came from the "German family of a Teplice manufacturer," and that he had had a love affair with the wife of the coal magnate Petschek. Petschek in Czechoslovakia is the perfect stereotype of a Jewish capitalist, the Czech equivalent of Rothschild. Sling had become a traitor and spy not because—like Clementis—he was a Czech nationalist but because he was a "cosmopolitan" of "bourgeois origin."

Sling was obviously a stand-in for Slansky. In September 1951, the Secretary General, isolated after the liquidation of his lieutenants in the party apparatus and in the police, was removed from his party office. His regime in the party, it was now charged, had made Sling's conspiracy possible. He had introduced dictatorial methods and tried to establish a second center of power. For two and a half months, Slansky was allowed to head a spurious office in the government with the title of vice-premier. Then it was "discovered" that he had been directly involved in the conspiracy, had been, as a matter of fact, its real head, and, of course, an

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imperialist spy. No proofs were offered for the charge, but party members were called upon to provide them by reporting his suspect moves. Slansky was arrested and a new wave of denunciations and persecutions began.

THIS time no doubt was possible that the new purge was a purge of Jews. Whether they were friends of Slansky or enemies, whether they were working in the party apparatus, in government offices, or in the nationalized industries, Jews were demoted, accused of sabotage, espionage, and treason, and arrested. Ludvik Frejka-Freund, the economic adviser of President Gottwald and one of the authors of the Five Year Plan, Rudolf Margolius, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, Gustav Bares-Breitenfeld, chief of party propaganda (and one of the three men who had investigated the charges against Sling and Svermova), Bedrich Geminder, the party's foreign expert and its former representative in the Cominform, Dr. Zikmund Stein, for thirty years the trusted party lawyer, were among the most prominent victims. F. C. Weisskopf, the ambassador to Peking, Eduard Goldstuecker, the minister to Tel Aviv, Arnost Tauber, the minister to Bern, Jiri Fischl, head of the Czech mission in Berlin, were recalled from their diplomatic posts and disappeared; some minor diplomatic officials abroad found asylum in democratic countries. Most of the victims were Communists of long standing; none of them was a Zionist or had any interest in Jewish religious or communal life. In most cases, their only relation to Jewishness was what the Nazis used to call "racial origin." Reports about their fall often describe them as "associates" of Slansky, and of course, nobody in the Communist party could escape *some* association with the powerful Secretary General who had placed and supervised the party cadres. But many victims have never been associated with him in a factional way, and some were indeed his rivals or opponents.

The few real Zionists still remaining in Czechoslovakia were also arrested. The Czech Communist regime, following in the path of the Hungarian and Rumanian governments,* began to deport "bourgeois elements"—among whom former Jewish businessmen formed the largest part—from Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, soon after Slansky's fall. At the same time, Mordecai Oren, a left-wing and pro-Communist leader of the Israeli Mapam party, disappeared in Prague while passing through on his way home from a Communist-sponsored peace conference in Berlin. Several weeks later, after many inquiries from Israel, Czechoslovak authorities revealed that he had been arrested for unspecified "subversive" activities. It was hinted that one of the charges against Slansky would be that he had helped rich Jews to escape to Israel, and that Oren had helped in illegal emigration. In any case, the Czechoslovak authorities now had a Zionist safely in hand for use in the Slansky trial.

On December 18, 1951, Premier Antonin Zapotocky declared that the Czech government "will tolerate no interference in internal affairs, be it from Washington or London, Rome or Jerusalem." On its face, the reference to Jerusalem was absurd: but Zapotocky was obviously interested in suggesting to his audience that a worldwide Jewish conspiracy was afoot against Czechoslovakia. Slansky had been accused of attempts to restore capitalism, and Zapotocky now reminded his audience of "reactionaries" who had wanted to return nationalized industries to "Jewish and other capitalists." The party press took up the clue eagerly. *Tvorba,* the Communist theoretical magazine, wrote about "cosmopolitan elements" who had come from the ranks of the "Zionists" and had "no roots in the nation." The newspaper *Lidove Noviny* attacked the "Zionist agents of imperialism" whose activities "extended far beyond the borders of Israel." The *Pravda* of Bratislava, the party's central organ in Slovakia, asserted that the "Zionists" had "wormed their way into the Communist parties in order to disrupt and undermine them from within." *L'ud,* another Communist newspaper in Slovakia, reminded its readers

* See "Hungary's Jewry Faces Liquidation," in the October 1951 COMMENTARY.

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that Slovak workers had been very angry at Jewish capitalists who had tried, after the war, to "recapture their lost positions" and export "great wealth" to Israel. The workers had been accused of anti-Semitism at that time, *L'ud* wrote, but in reality they had only expressed their sound class instinct. And the men who had raised the spurious issue of anti-Semitism were now finally unmasked as cosmopolitan traitors and liquidated. Thus, *L'ud* in effect approved the position of Slovak anti-Semites, who had instigated pogroms and riots in their opposition to the restitution of Nazi-confiscated Jewish property.

In this way the party press established the identity of "cosmopolitan" with "Zionist" and of "Zionist" with traitor. Being a Jew meant being suspect of these crimes; for the mass of less sophisticated readers, "Zionist" simply meant Jew. Anti-Semitism, slightly disguised as anti-Zionism, became respectable again. Official propaganda spoke of "Jewish capitalists" and their agents. But which Jew was not a capitalist agent if Slansky himself was one?

SEVERAL theories have been offered in explanation of these startling developments. One can be discarded in advance: the official one. Slansky and Ana Pauker certainly did not want to overthrow the Communist regime and restore capitalism. They were faithful and obedient servants of Stalin. They could not aspire to the role of Tito because they lacked all popularity and were the most hated of the Communist leaders of their countries. Their ascendancy was not due to any popular support, but only to their position in their party machines. Surrounded by Moscow creatures and Soviet spies, they could not even dream of a revolt against Moscow.

Another theory maintains that Gottwald rather than Slansky is the Czech Tito, and that he has fought Moscow with Moscow's weapons, accusing Moscow's agents of Titoism and liquidating them before they could liquidate him. This theory, although not absurd *a priori,* seems to be refuted by two facts. If it were true, Moscow would have intervened—and it has not, even though a year has elapsed since Slansky's fall. And even if Stalin perhaps hesitated to intervene openly in Czechoslovakia, it is inconceivable that he would not have intervened in Rumania, swarming with Soviet troops and under his very nose. If "national Communists" are now liquidating the "anational" agents of Moscow in Rumania and Czechoslovakia, then it must be occurring with the full consent of Moscow.

Only one explanation remains. There is no question that there were different factions among the Communist leaders in the satellite countries, competing among themselves and denouncing each other in Moscow. It is quite possible that these factions speculated on the victory of different groups in the Moscow Politburo, and that Slansky and Ana Pauker bet on the wrong horse. About these things we know too little to be sure. It is also possible—and that seems to be the simplest explanation—that Stalin played with several factions, inciting one against the other and thus keeping the satellite bureaucracy divided and impotent. But then, it would seem, the situation in these countries became so bad that scapegoats were demanded. It can be easily understood why Stalin, faced with passive resistance of the workers and with general unrest, chose to support, for a while, the "native sons." Domestic leaders with some popularity were needed to pacify the population. Mysterious, little-known, and "alien" *apparatchiki* made much better scapegoats. And the Jews among them made the best ones because one could mobilize against them the underground forces of anti-Semitism.

IT HAS long been one of the Communist articles of faith that intergroup tensions will disappear when the class divisions of bourgeois society are abolished. If there is no exploitation, no economic competition, there will be no envy, no hate, no prejudice against alien groups. Anti-Semitism grows out of the "abnormal social composition" of the Jewish minority. When Jewish capitalists

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and businessmen disappear, when Jews become workers and farmers, there will be no social reasons for anti-Semitic feelings. The best way to emancipate the Jews is thus to expropriate them. That is the theory which was tested by Russian history after the First World War and by Central European history after the Second.

In Central Europe, the Nazis exterminated most of the Jewish population, expropriated all Jewish property, and left the surviving remnant utterly impoverished. Astonishingly, all this did not weaken but rather strengthened anti-Semitism. After the war, the Jewish survivors hoped for compensation and restitution. They did not ask for the return of big enterprises, in any case subject to nationalization under the laws of the postwar regimes. Small factories and shops, homes, apartments, personal belongings, still remained private property; but when the Jewish survivors claimed them, they were violently opposed in two quarters.

First of all, there were the peasants who held former Jewish land, the artisans and businessmen now in possession of Jewish shops, people living in Jewish apartments, men who had undertaken to care for Jewish property or had been appointed custodians of such property by the Nazis or their successors—all of these had become accustomed to thinking of their new possessions as their own and of the surviving Jews as intruders.

This group was so numerous that the Communists--as well as other parties which were at that time still legal—undertook to defend them. Jewish claims were sabotaged, and restitution laws were either not enforced, weakened by amendment, or repealed. And this struggle over restitution was accompanied by open or covert anti-Semitic agitation which resulted in an increase of anti-Jewish feelings.

But there was another and much more formidable opponent of restitution: the Communist bureaucracy, which already looked on all the wealth of the nation as its own property. In its eyes, the Jews requesting restitution, however modest and well founded their claims, were "looters of national property" who were trying to "subvert socialist economy" by "capitalist restoration." It was this bureaucracy that sabotaged restitution proceedings, terrorized claimants into abandoning their suits, and tolerated a campaign against "Jewish capitalists" with distinct anti-Semitic overtones. Zapotocky had this in mind when he reminded his 1951 audience of the attempts to restore "nationalized industries" to "Jewish capitalists" in 1947.

The full expropriation of the large-scale property owners in the satellite countries was followed by a violent attack on the lower middle classes. Among them were many Jews who had managed, with little or no assistance from the restitution laws, to set themselves up as small businessmen and tradesmen in the permitted "private sector" of the economy. New laws expropriated their businesses. Now forced to live by selling whatever personal possessions they owned and to engage in marginal economic activities, they were denounced as "criminal speculators" and "black marketeers." Finally, many of them were arrested, sentenced to jail, or deported for forced labor. The expropriation of the Jewish capitalist became in the end the expropriation of the Jew; and all along the press denounced the harried Jewish population in terms that reinforced the ingrown anti-Semitism of Central Europe.

THERE were, of course, plans to "re-educate" and "re-stratify" the Jewish population. Jewish producers' cooperatives, especially in Poland, secured a small part of the Jews a steady income. Set up with funds from the American Joint Distribution Committee, and producing consumption goods for which there was a large unsatisfied demand, some of the co-ops prospered. But not for long. They were accused of "capitalist tendencies," forced to accept new, non-Jewish (and unskilled) workers, forcibly merged with other, less prosperous cooperatives and finally liquidated. Jewish workers were ordered into heavy industries; but even in the factories, other workers often regarded them as unwelcome competitors, especially if they advanced to supervisory or white-collar positions.

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This unhappy history demonstrated anew that the Soviet type of society only created new and sharper class divisions. Hard-driven workers hated the privileged managers and the Stakhanovite aristocracy; peasants fought against the attempts to expropriate their products by requisitions and their land by collectivization; and the competition between individuals in the same social position became murderous, for to keep one's job, one's apartment, one's ration card, one's freedom, and often one's very life, one had to work harder, and to drive one's subordinates more ruthlessly than the next fellow. Jews were caught in this *bellum omnium contra omnes* and anti-Semitism found a fertile soil in the conflicts of the new society.

Workers often selected Jewish managers or supervisors as special targets of their wrath, peasants often blamed their misery on Jewish commissars and speculators, and the bureaucrats tried to divert the hatred of the population to "cosmopolitan traitors." For a long time these feelings were kept underground, and incidents in which they manifested themselves openly were not reported in the press. For, according to official doctrine, anti-Semitism had been "abolished," and if the facts refuted the doctrine, so much the worse for the facts. But everyone felt that the situation was explosive and that a general Jew-hunt would follow if the government gave the green light. And it is for this reason that in all these countries the passion for emigration runs so high among Jews that they will risk every epithet and reprisal to register with the Israeli consulate, and overwhelm every facility for emigration that exists. But as in all Communist countries, every individual is considered a natural resource, and the last opportunities for legal emigration are disappearing.

Last year, this strong current of anti-Semitism became manifest in two official actions: the deportations and the purges. The deportation of bourgeois and "unreliable" elements in Hungary and Rumania decimated the Jewish communities of those countries; the arrest of Slansky was the beginning of a drive against all Jews in party and office, and the demotion of Ana Pauker was followed by anti-Semitic demonstrations.

At the beginning of the postwar era, the Jews in the satellite countries were promised restitution, equality, and free communal development. Later, they were forced to renounce restitution but were told that they would be able to freely develop their culture, if they took a wholehearted part in "socialist reconstruction." Shortly after, their cultural and communal institutions were liquidated or expropriated by the Communists, and they were now told that complete assimilation was the price for civic equality and protection against anti-Semitism. But even when this price was paid, the attack continued. The Jewish Communists, the Slanskys and Paukers, were completely assimilated to their ethnic and social milieu. But even they were still considered members of a "suspect" minority, and they still could be used as scapegoats for the crimes of a hated regime. Under the pressure of the inner conflicts created by the totalitarian society, the discarded weapon of anti-Semitism has once again to be enlisted in the protection of the state.

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THE FREE AMERICAN CITIZEN, 1952

Our Democracy, Two Years After Korea

ELLIOT E. COHEN

THE misunderstanding of the United States by Europeans is an old story: indeed it has been the small change of trans-Atlantic conversation for three generations. Yet, as late as two summers ago, a first-hand encounter with it could strike an American editor with the force of a revelation. This, though his own magazine had long been raising warning signals of the danger for us of the prevailing state of European opinion; and, as a matter of fact, he had gone to Europe as part of a cultural mission aimed at helping ameliorate this very situation. Alas for pride of prophecy. He had been predicting a cold snap: he found himself in the midst of the Blizzard of the Century.

He had plenty of company. Whenever he met his fellow-American plenipotentiaries on the Continent during those July days just after Truman had intervened in Korea—there seemed hundreds of them, economic, technological, and cultural, resident or visiting—he found them in a state of bewildered outrage over the "anti-Americanism" that seemed to beat on them from all sides. It is from those unhappy days that date most of the frantic editorializing, swinging between recrimination and soul-searching, and the hectic spate of programs for better understanding with our allies.

BIT by bit we have learned the dimensions of the problem—this may be the most we have to show for two years of trial and error. We learned first of all that Europe's hostile disrespect was due to no unfamiliarity with things American. There is a reasonably abundant flow of facts and goods and people across the Atlantic; if we are strange, it is not because we are strangers. Rather it is as if there hung between us, more formidable than any Iron Curtain, an invisible distorting lens that has skewed the American social landscape and its inhabitants into fantastic shapes. Whatever the multiplicity of factors that had wrought such a delusion, the Continent saw us as living in this distorted world. There was a myth about America, supported with the kind of intense emotionality which disqualified in advance any countering by reasonable discussion. And what a myth!—one rubbed one's eyes at the crude stereotypes that stood for the characters, and the vulgar comic-book drama that passed for the plot.

A second discovery was that belief in this myth was no monopoly of the uneducated masses, or of those under the sway of Communist propaganda or commitment. The highest luminaries of arts and letters were responsible for some of the silliest absurdities. Jean-Paul Sartre's fabulously successful play about our South, *The Respectful Prostitute*, presents only more nakedly the whole creaky paraphernalia of America as seen and believed, in one degree or another, by the European intelligentsia from Kafka to Kingsley Martin.

The hand of the Machine . . . a sullen population of robots chained to the belt-line, ridden by fear, bullied by threats and propaganda, and cozened by the vulgar mass arts and mechanical gadgets . . . a police state, ruled by Finance Capital through venal, illiterate political bosses, the FBI, and the generals, under the form of a sham democracy in which the population, given a meaningless paper franchise and deprived of all rights and liberties, finds itself helpless either to stay its own increasing victimization—see the charred black corpse swinging at every crossroad!—or to brake the suicidal careening of its production-and-profit-mad economy toward the imperialistic enslavement of all peoples, total war, and an apocalyptic holocaust and collapse. . . . It is, in essence, the myth of the

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Frankenstein monster, the machine built to be man's slave, and which enslaved him.

Behind the "anti-Americanism" of Europe's intelligentsia, there is little ardor for Communism or the Soviet Union: the term "neutralism" fairly enough characterizes a state of mind that fails to see any difference worth mentioning, much less fighting for, between our "capitalist democracy" and Russia's "people's socialism." If, as between the two slave states, there is a shade of inclination towards the East, it is partly the opportunistic accommodation that one makes to the nearer menace—plus a kind of persisting belief that the politics of the inheritors of the Russian Revolution, for all their present destructiveness, remain somehow geared to human ends. It is a real people's government; we are not.

THE Communists' absurd claim to be a people's government is so fair a target that we can be properly suspicious of critics who attack us for concentrating so much of our polemic on exposure and negation. Yet why don't we speak up about what *we* have to offer in the realm of politics?

How may a people be governed so that it can produce and share among its members the goods sufficient to their needs, while enjoying those freedoms and human dignities as vital as bread and shelter, and maintaining the strength and unity to protect itself from its enemies, foreign and domestic? This is the prime question to which the suffering peoples of the world today seek an answer—challenging us to offer an alternative to the Kremlin's confidently asserted formula.

Yet few proposals would evoke more bewildered shudders from enlightened Americans than the suggestion that in the everyday realities of the American political system we have our own answer to this question.

This editor heard such a shudder—or its equivalent—from more than one of his colleagues when, as a member of an American delegation at an intellectuals' congress at Berlin, speaking on a panel, "The Citizen in a Free Society," he offered some affirmative, mildly hopeful reflections on the character and quality of American political practice.*

*Most of the passages that appear in Section II of this article are quoted from the text of that address.

Thereupon, a highly esteemed American writer, an old friend, found it necessary to express his embarrassment. "Some eloquent passages," he remarked, "but hardly proper for this gathering . . . you should have waited for some European to say it!" The quick rejoinder from a hard-bitten ex-Communist Austrian historian, "How long would he have had to wait?" did little to allay the impression that one had committed a horrible gaffe.

Brooding over this during the sessions of Congress, and listening in the ensuing weeks to the interchange between Europeans and Americans, one became aware that something more than tact dictated our tactics; wasn't it rather that most sophisticated Americans—however anti-Communist—pretty well shared the overseas Dim View of our politics? Wasn't there something more than slightly familiar in the characters, the props, and the plot elements that composed Europe's myth of America? Did they do more than duplicate the melodramatic *mise en scène* made familiar to us by the creative imaginations of our most highly regarded social dramatists, novelists, forward-looking historians, social scientists, editors and journalists of the 20's on, both before and after the Popular Front dispensation? Whether this construct originated in our own national atelier, or whether it sprang from a common source, we will not stop to discuss here: but that the enlightened on both continents shared a common vision about "American democracy" is hardly arguable.

ACTUALLY, this comes as no revelation: what else have our best minds been saying through all their respectable organs of opinion for the past two decades or more? What else can they mean by the chorused reiteration that, after all, if "our boys" show no zeal for the struggle against the enemy, it is because we have no positive vision to give them worthy of their sacrifice. Variants on the same plaintive theme: our fighting men know what *they're* against, not what *they're* for. . . . How can *they* be expected to beat something with *nothing*?

Under the rhetorical indirection of the "they," it was, one suspected, the educated that were voicing their own defeatist skepticism about America; and listening to them in the months after the Korean intervention,

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one realized with dismay how little confidence there was among the forward-looking of our worthiness or our capacity to defend the freedom which we claimed as our heritage; and to rouse others to defend their freedom, if they had it, or to win it, if they lacked it, side by side with us.

If they had shown themselves self-dubious even in the face of Hitler, the challenge of Stalin's (and Mao's) Wave of the Future found them shamefaced as well as shaky. Few of the American liberal-minded were Communists, but one hesitates to estimate the extent to which for them the political sanction of World War II came from anti-Nazism and, positively, from the hopes of the Russian "revolution" embodied in "our Russian allies"—"they at least knew what they wanted, had *something* (of course, we disagree with it and deplore it) to offer. . . ."

In any case, now that Korean intervention found us engaged in a new grim struggle, there arose the old self-doubting cries again, cast in an even more despairing key. "Of course, we must defend ourselves, *but* what values can we in all honesty say we are defending? What new political hope, in competition with the Russians, can we offer to stagnant Europe and backward Asia?" Most awful specter of all—mobilizing our all to throw back totalitarianism, must we not inevitably become totalitarian ourselves? With reactionary demagogues and trigger-happy generals panicking our credulous masses with a mindless anti-Communist hysteria, are we not doomed to the slavery of the barracks state, fastened upon us by a fascism once again on the march?

II

WHAT have we to offer against all that? A great deal, some think—who have somehow found the sight and the grace actually to look at America.

One remembers the testimony of a certain wise man who had come to live among us after the Theresienstadt concentration camp, the venerable and heroic scholar Leo S. Baeck, one-time Chief Rabbi of Berlin. A score or so of American intellectuals—novelists, historians, poets, political writers—had gathered to listen to him; and after some talk of Goethe and Nietzsche and Mann, one voiced the question in all minds: "Can what happened in Germany happen here?"

The answer was in essence not religious or moral, but political. "No. I am sure that it cannot happen here, or in England, or anywhere else where there lives what we have never had in Germany—the free citizen, the man who at a certain point will stand up in the face of the state and say: so far and no further. And this man is born of a certain living experience which we in Germany never had, of having once in history faced up to the state, having known it for what it is, something not divine but made up of human hands, and so capable of being taken apart in the hands of ordinary human beings and put together again, something to serve, not as man's history-ordained master, but as his servant and instrument. When you have men in their millions who have the sense of this ingrained in them, you have that which will safeguard them—and will safeguard you—from the ultimate cataclysm and the final bestiality."

It is the fate of the intelligentsia who live by ideas often to be imprisoned by them. Yet, finally, can we resist the plain evidence of our senses? Might not we begin to be responsive to the possibility that in Dr. Baeck's free citizen, our fellow countryman (*homo Americanus*), we have not merely a lesser evil but a substantial, palpable, perhaps victorious good?

ONCE we have rediscovered him, I believe we will have little difficulty discovering the essence of the good he represents. It is no single principle or idea or institution, but it resides in the nuances of an individual personality and his mode of living. The plain fact is that that impossible, fantastic phenomenon, the citizen of Jefferson's dream, today walks the face of the earth by the millions, and more alive and kicking than ever. That paradoxical Jeffersonian man—who was to be at the same time the eternal rebel and the eternally responsible, who was to tear down and to build up, who was to know no higher good than the satisfaction of his own selfish needs and impulses and at the same time to join with others and to sacrifice all for his brother and the common good; the materialist who was to live by vision and the visionary but who was never to move from the practical, the feasible, and the plain evidence of his five senses.

What we see is that he has survived the

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vicissitudes of war and economic collapse, ideological perversions and seductions, has kept his own essential character, has been able to shift and change and grow. Certain crucial traits he seems firmly to have inherited from his 18th-century model. In his view of society, the individual human being remains at the center of the stage; and the satisfaction of the needs of the individual human being remains the duty and the obligation of government and political action. Today, as in the original version, he recognizes no end or aim or goal of his state or nation other than this; indeed there exists no political party or political ideology of any consequence that dares speak to him in the name of any other goal. He has kept his suspicion of the state and his fear of the accretion of power to government. He has kept as his touchstone the realities of daily life as they are *experienced by ordinary men*. And he has kept his skepticism about political absolutes and supra-human ideologies.

We can see today that some peculiar circumstances of American devolopment—indeed, the very circumstances that seemed to many to threaten the whole future of our national life—have helped us avoid certain grave pitfalls of our modern age. It is by now a commonplace that the 18th-century heritage of the French Revolution, in its statement of human rights and the laws of nature, was characterized by a certain abstract rationality. Perversions of the democratic theory were to grow out of this. In the name of these human rights, certain rulers and classes of the old regime were able to repossess themselves of their old authority, and certain new classes were able, by virtue of their asserted individual rights, to place themselves outside the control of the great majority of citizens. With the growth of concentrations of power, whether through industrialization or the centralization of government, man increasingly found himself a single, isolated, powerless individual vis-à-vis industry and the state. His parchment constitutions told him one thing; his daily experience with industry and government told him another.

HERE it was that necessity—difficult, dangerous necessity—seems to have come to the aid of the free citizen of America. An incredible diversity of racial stocks, religious denominations, and cultural groups poured into America from every quarter of the globe. To American and European thinkers alike, the diversity and heterogeneity of the American population seemed a fatal barrier to the shaping of a nation and the building of that mutual confidence, understanding, and unity necessary for survival. We know that unhappy phrase: "The Jews are our misfortune"; and, similarly, in a more general sense, most Western nations have felt that the alien in their midst was their misfortune. But, paradoxically, out of the necessity of having to learn to live with, and to share a government with, a diversity of peoples, we have learned not merely to accept heterogeneity and diversity as intrinsically enhancing and enriching; we have also learned that heterogeneity is a safeguard and a protection against the possibility that any individual or any group may be isolated or by category excluded. Thus, there has developed a political and social buffer, in the form of the many organized ethnic groups and religious denominations, between the lone individuals and the giant state and giant industry. The individual, in his struggle against the elephantiasis of modern institutions, is not alone and is not powerless.

But beyond and above these major ethnic and religious groupings, there is the host of cellular structures which Tocqueville noted so many years ago—the bewildering proliferation of private citizens' groups, formed by free association, in which Americans almost instinctively seem to join to carry out the most diverse aims and purposes, from the highest to the most trivial: fraternal orders, educational, health, and social welfare associations, neighborhood and regional organizations, associations for the slaughter of wild life and for the preservation of wild life, together with all varieties of associations for the protection of economic, financial, class, and occupational interests.

I remember two visiting intellectuals within the same week, one from England, the other from Germany, expressing wonder at the extraordinary amount of actual work that was in the keeping of such private groups. One, interested particularly in the public health field, had noted that as soon as the authorities took over the responsibility for

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fighting one disease, a new citizens' group sprang up to fight another. Indeed, the initiative these groups display, the sheer amount of work they voluntarily carry through, may well be the single most extraordinary phenomenon in the United States. Sometimes one feels these are not only a supporting, supplementary force, but the very social fabric itself.

The tendency in America to form these free associations is stronger than ever today, and in the field of government we have two seemingly contradictory trends: on the one hand, the increasing centralization of the state; on the other, the growth of what some denounce as "pressure groups," but which actually represent the recognized right of Americans to associate with each other in their own particular interest, and influence their government or their fellow men by whatever persuasion they can muster. It is common habit to sneer at the American as a "joiner"; but the word, it seems to me, is often used in precisely the wrong sense—as meaning that he is but a fragment of a collective, mass personality. The point of the matter is almost the reverse. He is a joiner, not primarily of mass organizations, but rather of a whole diversity of smaller groups and, significantly, each man is usually in many groups. Under our pattern many of these private groups exercise authority autonomously or jointly with government over important areas of commerce and the good and welfare. And we have succeeded, too, in maintaining the rights, responsibilities, and ties of the homelier smaller units which Jefferson held so important—the ward, the township and city, the county, the state, and the region.

Two benefits result: first, diverse loyalties are developed which modulate and whittle down the encroaching primal loyalty to the state, and it is thus that we have not merely a mixed economy but a mixed polity, a society organized under a governance that is only in part a government by law, and ruled as much by the free association and mutual self-limitation between men and men. Second, when each individual may belong either by formal or informal affiliation with so many groupings, some of which cut across racial, class, and economic lines, he tends to develop a sense of solidarity with all his fellow citizens, since in at least some of his associations he joins with men and women excluded in others. If the American white Christian does not meet the Jew or the Negro in his church or his club, he will meet him in his parent-teacher association or his union local. There are still gaps and evils: there are large areas where, shamefully, racial exclusion and discrimination powerfully operate, but in the interplay of the little communities with the great community, aided and abetted by organized protest, education, legislation, and the needs and general give-and-take of production and commerce, we have a dynamic process at work whose progress forward is steady and accelerating. Most on our conscience is the Negro: but even here we need hardly grovel in guilt before the other nations. Which society that has had the same problem has had greater success in weaving widely different "ethnic" groups into a national community: South Africa, Russia, India herself?

Furthermore, there is in these distinctive groups an offset to the uniformity of mass-produced, commercial culture, and a keeping alive of smaller gardens in which cultural produce seems always to grow better. Above everything else, this group life buttresses the individual in his private life, and if the American citizen is still to a happy degree a private person, we should point secondarily to the privacy of the polling booth, which we take for granted, but primarily to the privacy he enjoys in his home, in his ethnic ties, and his religious, community, trade, professional, party, and trade union associations. Perhaps in this intermediate fabric of voluntary organizations, we should see the true third force standing between the over-arching state power on the one hand, and the lone individual on the other.

A SECOND challenge to the free citizen has been, of course, industrialization, and its concomitant, urbanization, at a pace so swift and a scale so vast in America as to presage a total inundation of the individual. The Jeffersonian prescription, as prophets of doom have never ceased to point out, based itself on the small farmer, the small craftsman, and the small merchant. But another side of that same prescription has proved capable of withstanding and, to some extent —for the task is only just begun—domesticating the industrial monster. That we must

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domesticate it, we have never forgotten: our people have never been subject to machine-glorification or terror; nor have they ever found alluring that greatest of all machine concepts, the Industrial State. For us machines remain machinery, our tools and servants, never the Monster, the Model, or the Master.

By the other side of the formula, I refer to the stress Jefferson placed on the encouragement of sciences and techniques, not only to improve technology and productivity, but to help overcome ignorance and oppression; his faith in general education, for civic as well as vocational purposes; his stress on compromise, accommodation, and moderation in the relations of one group to another, and in the relations of the state to them.

All these have fostered a creativity in the arts of applying checks, balances, and restraints to curb the potential new tyrannies of industry and government. Spurred by the lessons of the depression, the United States has seen such a tremendous expansion and proliferation of government agencies and functions as to leave many Jeffersonians aghast. But at the same time, one must note that, by and large, the direction of this expansion and centralization has been in deep consonance with the spirit of the tradition: it has been toward enforcing checks and balances on industrial and financial power in order that we might protect and provide a fuller life for the individual citizen, while maintaining checks and balances on the machineries of the welfare state itself.

Most important of all, there has been, in all this, very little surrender on the part of the recalcitrant citizen of his jealously guarded right to his opinions and their free and open expression, and above all of his cherished right to opposition. The British have their "loyal opposition." In America every citizen would seem to consider himself a permanent member of his government's "loyal opposition." He is inveterately, as we say, "agin' the government." In war no less than in peace, we see him, despite episodic aberrations, refusing to be passive and submissive, refusing to place his destiny in the hands of any single leader, party, or elite. The free citizen has shown no signs of accepting any holding company for his rights other than the traditional agency of elected representatives, who by and large have been people like himself, chosen from among himself, with relatively little permanence and tenure, ruling temporarily and, as it were, by sufferance. Even in times of the greatest crisis, he has on the whole turned a deaf ear to demagoguery. His relation with his governors tends to remain a relation of one to one, rather than the relation of an anonymous member of a mass to a great Spirit who acts for him and speaks in his name. The larger America grows, the closer Americans seem to want to keep their leaders to them. It has some significance that in those countries that call themselves "people's democracies" the great leader finds it necessary and wise either to keep great armies of storm troopers between himself and his worshipful public, or to become invisible, except for graven images. The handshake of the citizen with his president remains an inviolable American custom.

While from birth a member of the loyal opposition to his own government, the American citizen does not evade responsibility for the acts of his country. Whenever the government has committed a wrong, he has felt himself individually shamed and implicated. To deny that one committed a crime because one "was only following orders," or to plead the eternal innocence of the "little man" is not in the American grain.

Along with this there endures the citizen's stubborn suspicion of force. Discipline and authority are still unpopular words. Uniforms are still not highly regarded; medals are not good form; and there is no trace whatsoever of adulation for feats of arms or military grandeur. Attempted encroachments on civil rights are bitterly fought inch by inch, and even the highest considerations of national security are yielded to only slightly and reluctantly.

And, perhaps of greatest interest in this international era, we see signs that the American citizen is growing beyond the isolationist tradition of the early American democrat. Nothing was more characteristic of our 18th-century political thinkers than their desire to cultivate their own garden and stay at home, and to avoid entanglements with foreign quarrels and responsibilities. Unquestionably, there was a broad, universal

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humanism about their doctrine, and there was no lack of sympathy for the plight of all mankind. But it remained abstract. The less favored nations were to learn by the example of what the New World achieved on its own home grounds. There is probably no stronger American emotion than this—and so it is amazing to what extent in a few short years the majority of Americans have shown a readiness to accept new and larger responsibilities for implementing their humanist tradition universally. Of course, there is behind this much of self-protection and a sensed mutuality of interests, rather than mere sentiment or ideology; but no sane person would be inclined to think this motivation at all dishonorable.

IT MUST be said that as compared with these extraordinary extensions and adaptations of the older tradition, there has been little corresponding development of ideas, philosophy, or any articulate expression of what has been achieved, or any appreciation of the deeper meaning underlying it. Perhaps the American's inveterate suspicion of ideologies restrains him. And, after all, what he has to contribute is not so much another and alternative competing ideology, but something more complex and subtle, a conspectus of a whole way of living, a web of practices, attitudes, insights, areas of compromise and of no compromise, plus a whole confused treasury of experiments, some "proved," some half-achieved, some tentative, some at the point of being discarded for new explorations, depending on time, circumstances, and conditions. *It is of the essence of our rule and our rulers, that we place our faith not on ideals and abstractions, but on human experience, not so much on human rights, as on humane processes.*

We have been having our debates in America as to the character and the essence of our democracy, and one of the favorite areas of search and discussion has been as to whether or not there is a religion at the heart of democracy or, put another way, whether democracy can hope to exist and free citizens remain free without some basic religious consensus. I would venture only a footnote on the issue. It seems to me that the free citizen, religious or non-religious, does have at least one shared conviction. Whether he professes to believe in God, or professes not to believe in God, he has a conviction that there is no God but God. To put it another way: I think both the religious believer and the man of secular faith in the United States come very close to holding in their hearts the Hebraic commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." I take this to mean that whether one believes in some transcendent power or not, one does not believe that there is any idea, institution, or individual—a man, a nation, an "ism"— that man can accept as a God. I cannot presume to speak for the religious man, but the essence of the secular humanist seems to me that he keep this obdurate recalcitrance in the face of all proposed faiths and ideologies that would give any political thing supra-human and transcendental value. In the political world of the free citizen, the individual human being stays, as we have said, in the center of the stage. In his individual self, he is humble enough not to think himself God or godlike, and he considers that he remains on eternally safe ground so long as he permits no other human being or human agency, no human priesthood or elite, to arrogate to themselves the attributes of the divine. His temper is too skeptical and experimental for him to allow any human being or any movement to equate itself with history, or for him to give credence to any political ideology that claims an inevitability and a determinism beyond the fallibility and the tentativeness of human beings struggling to build a society and maintain it in the face of the difficulties of nature and the enmities of man.

BUT here one always senses a broad demurrer on the part of the European. With your opportunities, say our friends in other countries, with your magnificent resources, with your abounding prosperity and abundance of material goods, with your relative security from aggression and attack—the achievements and promises of America are understandable; but what has this to do with us who have none or few of these things?

Of course this is more than half a truth, and certainly my own political and social views would not minimize the force of natural and economic circumstances. In the past century, we have indeed been a

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favored and a sheltered land. At the same time, we have seen enough recent history to know that there is more than a possibility that the free citizen's way of life may become indigenous to other lands and grow and flourish there. Certainly that cannot be said of the totalitarian systems. Nazism—though many feared the opposite—proved itself soon enough to be a non-exportable way of life, except in the relation of master to slave. And as is being proved in the satellite countries, world Communism is also non-exportable, except in the relation of master to slave. But while it is true that democracy cannot be imposed or exported ready-to-run, the general working blueprint can be. But after that, since the heart of it is self-dependence, it must in every land constitute itself, in the old Hasidic phrase, "from the gathering together of all the sparks" of hidden, if presently perverted and corrupted, virtues.

To many of us, it is most hopeful that so much of the American tradition about which I have spoken here, in a way that must have sometimes sounded idyllic or nationalistic, is but an extension and working out of ideas and insights of European thinkers—French, German, and especially English—and their Greek and Hebrew forebears which it has been our good fortune to have had the opportunity to put into practice on broader, richer acres and under fairer skies. What a gross impertinence it would be if an American intellectual should actually ask Europeans to defend the democratic tradition without at the same time acknowledging that the free citizen is in large part no American gadget but Europe's greatest creation. If in certain European lands the tradition has faltered or suffered crushing blows, we must believe that it still lives as the great—if submerged—tradition in the mind and heart of the people. The dream of a time when he can be free and a citizen is still the great dream of Western man, not as a substitute for bread and security, but as the only sure road for seeking and achieving such goods, and others no less precious. And why should we doubt that the dream that animates the aspiring Asiatic peoples or the road that they need to take for its achievement is different from our own? The political truths that our founding fathers held self-evident they never thought of as stopping at either ocean's edge.

III

YET, four years after the conquest of Czechoslovakia, two years after Korea, how much of all this had we succeeded in voicing to bridge the gulf in sentiment between Europe and ourselves? Militarily, economically, and diplomatically, our practical politicians and soldiers had flung across the gulf a network of rope-bridges. But there is no comparable progress toward that meeting of minds on political aims and goals that is the true Grand Alliance.

Here, as they would be the first to agree, we have a right to look to our leading minds and spirits; but from that quarter there has come no clear lead or inspiration, to say the least. One returned home after the Korean intervention to find the educated classes in a black funk—tomorrow the Soviet forces might be at the Channel ports, the next day after that over Washington: what was there to stop them? *They*—the Pentagon generals and admirals—were willing a war they couldn't possibly win. And there began, both among those who had no illusions about Communist evil and aggression, as well as those who were still not so sure, a period of suspicious soul-searching of our own motivations and designs, and our own national worthiness, that has lasted till today. We have seen every step of our program fearsomely scrutinized for imperialistic aims or the intent to impose our will—or our way—on our allies or the oppressed peoples—lest we be misunderstood. With reluctance, we were permitted to rearm and arm our allies. Programs for material aid were approved, but they were searched for political contraband; heaven forbid, that we should slip copies of the Declaration of Independence, and political directions for duplicating it, into our Care packages. Support of "reactionary" politicians was deplored, but neither were we to raise the slogans of political liberation, or democratic self-rule along American lines. *That* was political interference. Housing projects for the Ganges, yes, but otherwise hands off. Democracy, American model, was apparently too good for "backward" peoples—or maybe not good enough, as compared to the popular formula for "destroying feudalism."*

*A number of articles in COMMENTARY have noted this failure to raise the banner of democratic liberation and self-rule. Bogdan Raditsa, in "Beyond Containment to Liberation" (September

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Most favored of all was the soulful thought that the best way to meet the Soviet challenge was to reform ourselves at home—had we a right to point the finger at anybody else's broadest beam, so long as there was the slightest mote in our own eye?

Overwhelming all else was an alarmist screaming, a warning of one dire menace after another detected within our own sheepfold. The Black Tide of Reaction. Bourbonism. The Pentagon Mind. Red Hysteria. Neo-Fascism. Finally these nightmares were to materialize into twin super-menaces of such terrifying dimensions as to eclipse totally such trumped-up bogies as Stalin. MacArthur! McCarthy! Can one recall anything like the wave of terror that swept through the ranks of the enlightened as MacArthur's plane approached these shores—it was Hitler entering the Chancellery all over again: nothing could save us now! And then the dark days of the dictatorship of Senator McCarthy, when printing presses stood mute, when freedom of expression went underground in the universities, and radio-TV stations and the lights of Broadway and Hollywood were extinguished; and when roving mobs of Legionnaires cast into the overflowing dungeons any government employee or plain citizen heard expressing "an unpopular opinion." So our most reliable watchmen—from Justice William O. Douglas up and down—believed and reported week after week in the news columns, special "surveys," and Sunday magazine section of the authoritative New York *Times*, and so their opposite numbers in Europe read and believed, and were not surprised. To hear that fascism was at our threshold, or already inside, only confirmed their cherished myth.

1951), criticized influential opinion and policy-making experts for placing their full dependence, in the field of politics, on "realistic" power arrangements in Central Europe; and Sidney Hertzberg, criticizing Mr. Kennan's program for our relations with Russia, questioned the undemocratic "Realpolitik" he saw exhibited there (April 1952). Herrymon Maurer in "The Responsibility for the China Decisions" (also April) saw our failure in the East based on abandonment of our traditional democratic approach toward the solution of China's problem in favor of an emphasis on a more efficient and manipulative approach which led us to press for the coalition with the Chinese Communists, a policy decision which he reminded us had the assent of the experts of both parties, and of enlightened opinion.

SHOULDN'T we recognize that we are faced in this era with a disaffection with democracy on the part of our intelligentsia? One says "disaffection" because it seems a matter of sentiment and emotion, rather than of ideology or program. We should say at once that it is neither Communist nor Marxist—certainly not to the degree of its European counterparts—though the Stalinists have given it some of its vocabulary and mythology and at various junctures gained from it considerable aid and comfort for their cause: its contours and elements mark it as part of an indigenous tradition that antedates the Popular Front; its characteristic prejudices about democracy and the intelligence of the electorate are shared by modern-minded American "liberals" and "conservatives" alike. It especially colors the large majority of those who make their living and their contribution to society professedly by their brains (and this, incidentally, in our day includes large sections of the business as well as professional community)—irrespective of whether they think of themselves as intellectual, non-intellectual, or anti-intellectual.

This disaffection shows itself in a pervasive distaste, a shrinking from, an inveterate disrespect for the bumbling all-too-human processes of public affairs as practiced here; and above all in a condescending contempt, mistrust, and fear of "the masses." The People, yes; the Common Man, yes; but we are aware by now that these are the abstractions of those who prefer, instead of the old ideal of human fraternity, one or another of those schemes or regimes operated from above by the small self-selected fraternity of those who know better on behalf of the anonymous little men who know less.*

One is tempted to describe some of the elements of the mentality of so many among America's enlightened, and to pin down the factors in class, culture, and historic event

*See this writer's "Citizen's Victory: Defeat of the 'Common Man'" in the December 1948 issue of this magazine for the suggestion that the concept of the "common man" (in contrast to the "citizen") at the root of most modern "popular democratic" and "national socialistic" movements has its source in, and shares common elements with, the assumptions and managerial-manipulative practices of large-scale industry and commerce, and their allied mass-communication industries.

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that have given to its *malaise* its peculiar quality and shape: its congenital idealism, which sees whatever *is* as wrong and unworthy, as against what can be thought or imagined; its persistent utopianism; its disvaluation and rejection of the near and the everyday as compared to the future and the faraway; its indispensable role and its ambiguous responsibilities and peculiar status in our large-scale corporate, governmental, and mass-communication institutions; its aspirations as an elite, and its patent greenness and inadequacy for the role; its fetish-worship of Science (including the sub-sciences of psychological manipulation) and Revolution as the twin-motors of its particular brand of predestined Progress; its occupational isolation from people and experience and its specialist narrowness; its lack of sympathetic identification with its fellow men which, under the name "objectivity," it has made into the prime intellectual and moral virtue of its class; it glorification of methods and its indifference to their human implications; its faith in the great Idea, the over-all Solution, and the Big, Strong Man; its vaulting ambitions and their recent terrible defeats; its insecurity, guiltiness, and panic. But all this is a matter for many articles, not to say books; and, parenthetically, there are few subjects more important for study if we are to understand our times. In the space here remaining, this writer can only hope to expostulate a bit with the alienated, in the light of some recent facts.

FORTUNATELY, we are just now enjoying one of those national moments when even the sophisticated awake to a sense of the capacities of our democracy, like the glow that followed the Truman surprise election. Our two presidential conventions, perhaps the most scorned symbols of the whole vulgar, fraudulent, worthless farce of American politics, exhibited themselves on the most glaring public stage in history—and out of them emerged two excellently qualified candidates authentically reflecting the nation's needs and the people's choice. Come to think of it, even faced in the raw, the proceedings and the personalities involved had not seemed disreputable, irresponsible, or unintelligent.

Using our momentarily unjaundiced eyes, might we not glance back over our citizens' performance in the last two years' ordeal? Faced by a sudden massive attack, thrust suddenly into vast new worldwide responsibilities, our ordinary President* and our ordinary Congress—those two other universally hooted symbols!—have taken courageous decisions, developed large programs of armament, aid, and reconstruction, steered a reasonably steady international course in the face of Soviet threat and trickery, and managed throughout a high measure of domestic well-being and national unity—in short, found the necessary capacity and skill to lead an imperiled nation. Under great stress and inner anguish, with warnings of imminent menace and doom dinning their ears, our citizenry have shown little serious tendency to succumb to panic, divisiveness, hysteria, or hate. They have not cried for demonstrations of our might and power: they have waited to see the whites of the enemy's eyes—and kept their A-bombs in dry storage. In the face of the sudden revelation and the continuing danger of a ruthless conspiracy infiltrating opinion and institutions, the record shows no political persecution such as World War I's Palmer raids, and few invasions or abridgements of civil rights and liberties. The citizenry has only asked that known Communists and fellow-travelers be removed from positions of high security or public trust and influence: at this late date, only a small handful of the top leadership of the Communist party has been subjected to indictment or imprisonment, and then after lengthy, scrupulous legal trials, quite devoid of mob pressures. Aside from these, political dissenters have not suffered arrest or frame-up, nor has the expression of dissent, including that of Communists, been suppressed. There have been episodic attempts at suppression, some unwise and dangerous laws passed and legal precedents set up, and administratively there have been and are serious black spots, especially in the fields of immigration and visa control. But the traditional democratic recourse of organized protest is still available and remedy of abuses is

*Possibly as illuminating as any single reflection of the attitude of the intelligentsia to American democracy is the peculiar sense of affront that it has never got over feeling at the presidency of Mr. Truman, a representative product of our political system, and its inability to appreciate any facet of his personality or his approach to the nation's problems.

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not only feasible but likely.* During this whole period the status of alien and "minority" groups, customarily subject to suspicion and scapegoating in times of tension, has steadily improved. And as for that mother of all nightmares, the threat of a domestic fascism, with the shoeless and the know-nothings swooping down on the cities from the swamps and the hills and sweeping us under in the storm tide of black reaction—where are the signs? As for McCarthy, he remains in the popular mind an unreliable, second-string blowhard; his only support as a great national figure is from the fascinated fears of the intelligentsia. As for MacArthur, the General on Horseback came, had his ticker-tape triumphs, and faded away at the convention, clearly revealed under the klieg lights as no neo-fascist demagogue but a somewhat more rhetorical Hoover, exciting among the citizenry much the same bored respect for his dullish conservative aphorisms.

WE WOULD not be happy if America's intelligentsia were suddenly to point as a man to the dome of our Capitol and declaim Lincoln Steffens' words, "I have seen the Future, and it works." But perhaps we might begin to admit the possibility. Maybe *here*, right on our own doorstep, is the long yearned-for political alternative, after all.

We are proudly exporting our technological skills and our technical experts to our global cousins; what of this "know-how" of self-rule, possibly the best of all of the techniques and processes of our devising? Why not, as a beginning, share with the peoples of the world a true report of all this—not written chauvinistically, or uncritically, or ideologically, but *as is* with all its imperfections on its head? What could be more useful, not merely for their greater understanding and closer bond with us, but so that they might be encouraged to go and do likewise?

But any such possibility as this is still some way off, one fears. Prior to any such hope, we must achieve the coming home again of our own "forward-looking" intelligentsia. Before rapprochement can be made with Europe's and Asia's intellectual spokesmen, there must be some larger inclination of sympathy and identification between our own writers, thinkers, "experts," and professionals, and our own life.

TO BE sure, there have been changes of heart lately, but oftenest these have been in the direction of the rejection of politics and political issues altogether, in favor of a retreat to the privacies of mysticism, art, and the personal life and career. Happily, however, there are signs of something else: a certain beginning curiosity about the actual aspect of life as lived in America, leaving the traditional intellectual myths and ideologies to one side. Also, there is a certain drawing toward one's neighbor even if he lives in a different neighborhood—and here and there discoveries are reported, in a note of pleased excitement. And there is abroad a sense that, while the world is as desperate as ever, the ground just around one's feet is a little solider. The recent years have been a nightmare for the enlightened; but in more places than one today there is the good feeling of having come back into the free air after years underground. Perhaps soon those who must do our talking to European opinion will find the kind of unabstract, living words that because they report of things seen rather than dreamed or feared, will bring belief, accord, and a new courage to our allies in the continuing great struggle for human freedom.

Even more important, such a return to American realities and renewed confidence in our democracy would invigorate laggard, faithless elements among ourselves, and give

*There have been throughout the period the threats of individual demagogues—mostly tin-pot, but always potentially dangerous—and of over-excited pressure groups; and the climate of opinion—on which, after all, the safeguarding of liberties depends more than on legalities or legislation—has remained disturbed and confused. Most of the responsibility here lies with the primitives and the patrioteers, whose performance in their traditional roles of enemies of freedom has been up to scratch. One wishes one could say as much for the forces of light in their role. They, alas, have shown themselves little concerned with the harm of Communist infiltration into our institutional life; though abstractly they admit that Communist totalitarianism is as evil and as destructive as the Nazi variety, they have shown nothing like the same zeal in counteracting Communist cadres and fellow-travelers as influences in this country. In a situation requiring above all the kind of intellectual clarity and moral leadership in which they supposedly specialize, they have shown themselves unreliable and uncommunicative as to the facts, and they have seemed more interested in professional and political self-protectiveness than in safeguarding the general interest.

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clearer direction and vertebral stiffening to our foreign effort. After all, first things first. We chiefly need our alienated intelligentsia home again because it is to their dissatisfactions, their zeal for human betterment, and their knowledge, skill, and creative power that we owe so much of what we have built politically and socially in America—and the job within our own borders is still only half done.

We have had a failure of American intelligence—but we cannot live, much less go forward, without intelligence, or the men of intelligence. Now that the faith in glorified saviors and quick collosal solutions has largely gone, the way is open. Most promisingly, we have in the past months seen something like a movement toward a reevaluation of the American scene and a critical reexamination and revision of some of the leading concepts and attitudes that have dominated opinion among the moderns. The first fruits of this have been visible in half a dozen of our better magazines, both "serious" and more popular, and there are even some books. Undoubtedly, this reflects a search on the part of broad sections of the intelligentsia for new paths, some of which may turn out to be older paths.

In any case, there is more than a beginning. And we should not forget that we have a seasoned minority of sizable number who have pretty much known the score these past fifteen years or more, and are being increasingly listened to. Particularly noteworthy, the student and younger graduate generation shows few signs of allowing itself to be panicked by its more fearful elders: it appears to have made up its mind to look around for itself, and it seems to be looking in the right direction. There lies the best hope.

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MY CHILD: JEW OR CHRISTIAN?

A Mother Struggles with a Dilemma

ELEANOR K. FELDER

SOON I suppose another child will ask my son that simple question all children ask, "What are you?" I don't know yet what my son will answer. He can't say, "My father's Jewish and my mother's Presbyterian." The world demands a more precise answer. "What are *you?*" it insists on knowing. Thousands of us who have married out of our religious groups face the problem: where do our children belong? At this moment my husband and I are deeply involved in searching for an answer.

Although my husband's background was Jewish, and his friends and business associates were largely Jewish, he had never been a temple-goer. Our marriage was performed on neutral ground, New York's Municipal Building. After my marriage I moved to a different city, and I made no new church affiliations.

Even the birth of our child failed to force a decision on us. He simply was not baptized, and though he was circumcised, the operation had no religious significance attached to it. My mother once asked, anxiously, "Will you send him to a temple?"—adding: "I really don't care, just so you give him some kind of religious training." The remark was lost in the turmoil that accompanies the arrival of any baby. Then after a while we found ourselves with a child who could walk and talk and ask questions, and gradually we realized that our stemming from two different religious groups was not to be ignored out of existence.

IF EITHER of us had been a devout practitioner of his faith, the problem would have been solved: the child would simply have adopted the "stronger" religion. But actually we were Jewish and Protestant by name rather than conviction. My husband had grown up in a Jewish neighborhood and in a home where Jewish holidays were lovingly observed, although he cannot remember having attended services in a temple, and had no Bar Mitzvah; he says he was very conscious of religion as a child. The family then moved, he went away to school, and little by little his religious concerns left him. Now, though he thinks of himself as Jewish, he gives the word no religious connotations.

As for me, I went to a Protestant Sunday school and obediently attended church on Sunday, even during my college years. But eventually there came my time for re-evaluating and discarding; today I still call myself a Protestant, but I do not go to church.

This was what our religions had meant to us. What were we to do about our child? What had other people done? I began to take a mental poll of other "mixed marriages."

Most of them, like us, had drifted along, non-active Jews married to non-active Protestants. One couple I knew had brought up their two children without any

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IT SEEMS to be American experience that marriages between persons of different religious and "ethnic" backgrounds confront their toughest dilemma in the problem of what kind of religious training, if any, is to be given the children. And, as ELEANOR K. FELDER points out in this candid discussion, the problem sometimes becomes only the more difficult if neither parent has any strong religious feeling of his own; Mrs. Felder, her article makes clear, is still searching for the solution to the problem. A graduate of Wellesley College and the Columbia School of Journalism, Mrs. Felder has worked as a reporter on the New York *Post* and the New York *World-Telegram,* and has published articles in the *Christian Science Monitor Magazine*. She is married to a doctor and has one son.

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religious training at all. The mother thought the whole thing "unimportant"—people accept you anywhere if you are a pleasant, interesting person, Jew or Gentile. Her attitude seemed to be: "Close your eyes and the whole thing will go away."

In other marriages, one member had been converted to the other's religion. Three wives I knew had been converted to Judaism; two told me later that a conference with a psychiatrist before marriage had convinced them of the importance of settling the religious question before the complicating factor of children arose. One husband I knew had been converted from Judaism to Catholicism, his wife's religion; their child is Catholic. Where either the husband or wife was extremely devout, this partner usually adhered as strictly to his old religion after marriage as before, while the partner who had had no strong religious belief maintained his former attitude; this usually made the question of the children's religious upbringing relatively simple. Another pattern was the adoption of a "compromise" religion. Three couples of my acquaintance exchanged Catholicism and Judaism for the Methodist, the Baptist, and the Unitarian churches; Ethical Culture and the Community Church in New York are other common grounds.

All this I found very interesting, but it did not provide the particular answer for us and our child.

FOR several reasons, I thought it important to give my son some kind of religious training. One reason, certainly, was the memory of my own church-going. Sunday school on Sunday morning had added a pleasant stiffening to the fabric of my childhood. I liked the bustle of going to church. I liked hearing stories and learning new things, especially in an atmosphere so much more relaxed than that of my weekday classes.

I feel, also, that studying the Bible in a church school provides a valuable cultural and historical background for a child. And, still more important, I wanted my son to attend a church so he would have a feeling of identity, of belonging. I wanted to avoid, if I could, the experience of a friend whose child came to her in tears. "I know you're Jewish and Daddy's Methodist," the child said. "But what am I? The kids say I'm not anything."

A Jewish friend told me I was putting too much emphasis on making a decision. "We're not sending our two children to a temple," she said, "and I assure you they're not suffering." But her children have four Jewish grandparents, Jewish cousins, Jewish uncles and aunts; they know what they are. My son must know more formally.

I have still another reason for my opposition to the theory that you should let a child drift till he can "choose for himself." Parents may be agnostics, or even atheists, but it seems to me an invasion of their children's rights to presuppose that they, too, are agnostics and atheists. Children have a *right* to be exposed to religion. The concept of a God who watches over each sparrow may give the child a deep sense of warmth and protection. It's true, it may not. But can conscientious parents arbitrarily deprive their children of this possibility?

These were my reasons for wanting to take some kind of action. I decided then to attack the problem frontally.

I CALLED three leading Jewish agencies and asked for any studies that had been done on intermarriage. There were none, I was told.

Frustrated of statistics, I turned to my husband. He said, "Why don't you ask a minister what he thinks?" Diffidently I approached a young woman whose child played in the same park with mine. "I know your husband is a minister," I told her. "I'd like to talk to him." That was the start of a series of interviews with Protestant ministers, rabbis, representatives of non-sectarian groups, and experts in the field of child guidance.

No two of these authorities gave me the same advice. But all were in dramatic agreement with my own basic feeling. We do

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not care what religious training you give your child, they told me. But give him some. Do not let him drift. "If your child grows up in a religious vacuum, how can he make a choice?" one minister asked me. Another one said, "You've got to give him something to revolt against later on, at least." A rabbi said: "If you let the child drift and then expect him to choose for himself, he'll probably always drift. As a rabbi I would rather you let him grow up in the Christian church than give him no religion at all."

A child psychologist expressed it this way: "It is hard for a school-age child in our conforming society to have no answer to the question, 'What are you?' It marks him as something different, strange, inferior. It's something that can make a child anxious, and from anxieties grow neuroses."

But the similarity in the points of view of the different men to whom I spoke ended there. One minister felt it was extremely important for my child to have training in both Judaism and Christianity. He advised me to let the child start in the temple, learning about Judaism, which came first historically, and then later send him to a Christian Sunday school to learn about the New Testament and Jesus.

A liberal rabbi advised me to have only one religion in the home. His insistence, I felt, went to an extreme: my conversion to Judaism and remarriage by a rabbi.

The point of view of one of the non-sectarian groups was that a child cannot have both religions. "You can't have a child with a split personality," said the spokesman of one of the non-sectarian groups, a man who classified himself as a "religionist." "It's better to be a good Jew, or a good Christian, or a good religionist. To do anything else is only confusing."

To have two religions, the child guidance expert assured me, would also stamp a child as different and strange, and, even more serious, might be symptomatic of a real breach between the parents. People would be justified in saying to my child, "What's the matter with your parents? Why can't they get together about you?"

All of these points of view were useful to me, but my original problem remained. If we eliminated the possibility of letting our child grow up in a vacuum, if we ruled out giving him two religions, what factors were we to consider in selecting the kind of religious training he was to receive?

A RABBI told me that he could only advise me to "shop around" quite openly and frankly in different churches and temples. "The main point is that you must decide on a church for yourselves and send your child there," he insisted with quiet firmness. In effect, he rebuked me for regarding the selection of a religion as an intellectual exercise.

I realized that there was much in what he said. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to immerse our son in a religion while remaining aloof and detached ourselves. I would have to show some interest, if only to the extent of taking him to church on Sunday and picking him up again, or hearing his Sunday-school lessons at home. Children are quick to detect a scoffing, scornful attitude on the part of adults. A child psychiatrist told me of an eleven-year-old girl who said through her tears, "My mother doesn't believe in God. She makes fun of him."

The same rabbi brought up another difficult question: "Which would be harder to give up—Judaism for your husband or Christianity for you?" I told him that since my childhood the focal point of the year for me had always been Christmas, and that it would be a hardship for me to give it up, not so much for its religious content as for its emotional connotations. He was sympathetic but reminded me that a rabbi could hardly be expected to say, "All right, let your child be brought up as a Jew, but give him Christmas as well."

On this point, I am sure there is broad ground for disagreement. Many Jews regard Christmas as a national or folk holiday, and celebrate it with greens and the exchange of gifts. In my child's case, I am sure his life would be enriched by the observance

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of two sets of holidays. In practice, I know it would be difficult for us consciously to avoid the observance of either the Christian or the Jewish holidays.

A question from one of the mental-health authorities gave me much to think about. "Have you done anything in your community to make yourselves thought of as anything other than Jewish? Many times the thing that makes you a Jew is the way you think of yourself. And this may be casual or even unconscious." As he said this I thought of the many occasions when neighbors or tradespeople had made remarks based on the assumption that I was Jewish. I had certainly never corrected their impression.

"Do you think one of us has to renounce his old beliefs?" I asked him.

"Don't say renounce or repudiate," he advised me. "It's a process of unifying, of exchanging one thing in return for something else."

Finally I reached the point in my discussions with these men when I no longer received fresh ideas. But I still hadn't arrived at any solution.

WHAT became of children like ours? Where did they end, with what identifying tag? I thought carefully of all the children of mixed marriages I had known from childhood to the present day.

For some, I knew, the orthodoxy of one parent, the family's milieu, or the father's religion had served as a conscious or unconscious determinant. Such cases did not offer the answer I was seeking.

Another significant fact soon became apparent. Of all these people, there was not one to whom I felt I could go for an open, frank discussion of the problem, either because they had made no sober, reasoned decisions about their group identification, and were just drifting, or because they plainly regarded religion as a painful area to be avoided in even the most intimate conversations. It is much easier to discuss the religion of their children with intermarried couples than to discuss with the products of such marriages their own religious feelings.

One wife pleaded, "Please never bring up the question of a religion for your Samuel with my husband. You know, he's so bitter about his brother." The brother in this case was trying to live down his father's Jewishness by refusing to have contact with the other members of his family.

Like this brother, though less dramatically, most of the children of intermarriage with whom I came in contact had allied themselves with the Christian parent. Some never referred to the fact that one of their parents was Jewish.

One girl whom I had known well in college, the daughter of a Christian father and a Jewish mother, was able to ignore the problem because she lived in an atmosphere where religion played no part in any case—her father was a college professor, and she could feel that her mother's Jewishness in a sense did not really exist. This seems to me an illusory "solution"; in any case, my son's surroundings do not permit even that.

Another girl ignored her father's Jewishness in the same way. She had been brought up in a largely Gentile suburban community, and thought of herself as Gentile. When I knew her, however, she was undergoing a severe crisis. She went out with Jewish men, but was reluctant to marry a Jew. Finally, she was driven to seek psychiatric help for her problem.

Other children of mixed marriages are sent to Protestant Sunday schools but make no attempt to hide the fact that one of their parents is Jewish. Of those I knew well, all seemed healthy and well-adjusted personalities. This may be accidental, but it might also be considered support for the "give him some religion" point of view. In any case, the lives of these people were not complicated by shame about their Jewishness and fear of "exposure."

A few unusually fortunate people seem able to accept both identities and to be accepted by both. In some families I knew of in which this happy state of affairs existed,

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there was no formal religious training, but there did exist outstanding wealth and fame. This no doubt facilitated the seemingly effortless adjustment.

CASES of a child adopting the religion of his or her Jewish parent are rare in my experience. One girl whose story I was told had been brought up in the religion of her mother, a Catholic, but in her early twenties decided to be Jewish like her father. Gradually she gave up Catholicism, became a temple-goer, and eventually married a Jew. Her children are Jewish.

Perhaps the most heartbreaking pattern is the adoption of the Jewish religion by one or two children in a family, and the adoption of the Protestant faith by other children in the same family.

A ten-year-old of our acquaintance has a Jewish mother and a Methodist father. His older brother is a Methodist, but his mother and grandmother have claimed the younger boy for Judaism. The child complains, "The minister takes Joey to the circus and the rabbi doesn't take me anywhere. I want to be a Methodist like Joey." The child resents, too, his father's having no strong conviction about religion as his mother and grandmother have. Because of his parents' failure to come to some uniform decision, this disturbed child is pitted against his brother and torn between two parents and two religions.

In another case of two sisters, both now married, one has espoused the religion of her Jewish mother, while the older is a Christian, and indeed so ashamed of her Jewish blood that she has broken off relations with her family. No doubt this situation stems from a more basic trouble in the girl's relations with her parents, but I wonder whether, if she had received religious education in a temple, her feelings might not today be more normal.

A JEWISH friend advises me: "Your child is just as much Gentile as he is Jewish, and it will certainly be easier for him to grow up in a majority group."

I find myself rather impatient with that kind of reasoning. It is like another foolish simplification: "If I had money, I wouldn't have any problem." In this case it is: "If I weren't Jewish, I wouldn't have so many problems." The fact is that to be an adult means to have problems. I had never thought that being Jewish had caused my husband or his brother any real difficulties, and I told my friend I was surprised at her point of view.

"You can never understand," she said. "We don't go where there's a danger of our not being wanted. We stay inside our comfortable ghetto. That's why being Jewish never caused your husband any hardships."

My husband's brother offers another point of view. "Our whole family is Jewish and everyone in the neighborhood knows it," he points out realistically. "Why would your child suddenly go to a Protestant Sunday school? You know how people feel about Jews who try not to be Jews."

But my husband believes we can't concern ourselves with this attitude. There will always be evilly disposed persons, he feels, and we must be motivated by conviction, not by fear of censure. To him, the one basic danger for such a child as ours is that he might become ashamed of his Jewishness, and even turn anti-Semitic.

Ideally, a child of intermarriage would grow up with respect for the two great traditions he embodies; instead of feeling himself to be "nothing," he would feel that he had the advantages of both Christianity and Judaism—the best of both worlds, so to speak. In fact, of course, we live in a society where Gentiles constitute the majority, and a half-Jewish child is automatically marked as belonging to a "minority." Again, the Jewish parent may resent his own Jewishness and transmit this unexpressed feeling to his child, or the Gentile partner in a mixed marriage may have latent anti-Semitic feelings which come to expression in the child.

Where the family lives is another important factor. It might be simple for our child to grow up as a Gentile in the community in which my parents lived; there

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he would be known as my parents' grandchild, and would be Gentile without any question. But to grow up as a Gentile where his cousins and all my husband's family are known to be Jewish would require a kind of active eradication of his Jewishness, and the effects might be serious.

Perhaps this is why my husband says, "I think more doors will be open to him as a Jew with a Gentile background than as a Gentile with a Jewish background."

If receiving training in Judaism would keep our son from feelings of self-contempt or anti-Semitism, my husband would favor that solution. But in his heart he is not convinced that raising a child as a Jew will automatically solve that problem. He believes—and I agree—that no educational recipe will in itself give the child self-respect; what will count is *our* attitudes.

WE AGREE that there are no "compromise" solutions which will work: our son must be given either a Jewish or a Protestant religious education. But the choice is still to be made.

Fortunately, our problem is not complicated by bigotry or bitter feelings in either my family or my husband's. "Just so long as the child is happy, we're happy," all the grandparents agree. And we too are concerned only with the child's happiness—to make the matter quite explicit, we are concerned with his happiness more than with his believing in God.

My husband, deeply involved from his childhood with Jewish traditions, holidays, and customs, is willing to hear his son say, "I am a Protestant." I, who am not an active church-goer but have always loved the Christian holidays and the stories of the life of Jesus, am willing to hear my son say, "I am a Jew."

That is where we stand at present. But a decision will be made. By the time a playmate asks my son that simple question—"What are you?"—I hope we shall have given him his answer.

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THE PEOPLE VS. BEN GURION'S GOVERNMENT

The Present Crisis in Israel

JON KIMCHE

THE first time I met Ben Gurion he was studying Greek and reading Thucydides; that was ten years ago. The last time I saw him—in the early summer of 1952—he was living Thucydides. This Athenian comparison is, in fact, the clue to his crisis.

During this past month I have sought to isolate, from a mass of notes, conversations, articles, and impressions, the essence of what has upset so many Jews and a good many of the best Zionists about Israel today; what, in short, was the nature of Israel's crisis? The evidence suggested that it was not the economic emergency; this was serious and contributed largely to the general *malaise* but it was not the main ingredient. I came to the conclusion that it was the moral crisis in all its facets which underlay the economic crisis and was itself the overriding problem: but again this also did not provide a complete answer. It was not until I re-read Thucydides that I think I began to understand the nature of the crisis.

There is, in fact, not just one all-embracing crisis; there are three quite distinct crises: one of the government, one of the people, and—Ben Gurion's. For the sake of simplicity, the first two can be best described as "the case against the government" and "the case for the government." The government of Israel is charged by the people with unreliability, indecision, inefficiency, nepotism, and bureaucratic arthritis. And the people of Israel are accused by the government of lacking a sense of civic responsibility, of seeking the fleshpots today rather than building the future, and of, by their daily practices, making good and efficient government virtually impossible.

Both together make up Ben Gurion's crisis. This can be described with Periclean brevity:

"I am the same man; my views are unaltered; it is you who change, since in fact you took my advice while unhurt, and waited for misfortune to repent of it; *and the apparent error of my policy lies in the infirmity of your resolution,* since the suffering that it entails is being felt by everyone among you, while its advantage is still remote and obscure, and, in face of a great and sudden reverse, your mind is too depressed to persevere in your resolves."

This was also the diagnosis made by one of the acutest observers in Israel, a farmer of the Sharon plain who has grown up with the country, a friend and counsellor of the government who has, however, always been independent of it. Earlier this year he was away from Israel for some months, and these were his impressions when he came back: "I am not worried about our survival. What worries me is that I cannot see the idealism, the pioneering spirit, and the unselfishness that were our towers of strength. One feels as if we lived among those who came out of Egypt with Moses with all the familiar complaints."

This was the crisis of Pericles in Athens twenty-five centuries ago; that of Moses in the desert a thousand years before Pericles; and now, in the 20th century, it is Ben Gurion's: a crisis of the government and of

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the people. But it is, of course, a wholly different crisis when seen through the eyes of the government, or through those of the general public, whether Israeli at home or Zionist abroad.

AT THE root of the case against the government—and that means the whole complex governing hierarchy ranging from ministers through the government departments to the Jewish Agency and its satellites—is that they have lost the confidence and respect of those whom they govern.

The cabinet is looked upon not as the supreme national authority directing the affairs of the nation, but as a collection of individuals who act as the delegates for the most influential vested interests, which, because of their numerical strength, or because of the accidents of Israel's electoral system, are able to exert their sectional interests in the highest council of the nation. Labor respects only the labor ministers; the religious only the Orthodox; and the opposition—the General Zionists, Mapam, Herut, and the Communists, comprising 300,000 out of 695,000 electors—respect none.

The Knesset, on which not so long ago the nation's intense political interest was focused, now shares in the decline of public esteem for the national institutions. Like the government, the Knesset is not viewed as the incorporation of the nation's will or the sounding board for the free discussion of its problems. It is neither a debating chamber nor the council of state that the British Parliament becomes in periods of emergency. On the contrary, the Knesset has become a platform for the declamation of party attitudes, where speeches are often prepared before the debate and read to an empty house, and where there is no intention either to persuade one's opponents or to be persuaded by sober reasoning. The public has evidenced a healthy sense of discernment by showing its distaste for this pale shadow of parliamentary discussion. Moreover, the calibre of the average Knesset member—with some outstanding exceptions—is not impressive. The voter has no real choice in picking his representative. He votes for a party list. The actual Knesset representatives of the parties are chosen by the party executives—and qualifications in such selection can easily be left to the imagination of the reader.

Any moral authority which the government wishes to exert has therefore to be earned either by the success of its policy or by the quality of its administration. Fortunately for Israel, this moral authority has to a large extent been achieved by the Foreign Ministry and by the two decisive home departments: the army and the police. These have been protected from politics and saved from having to divide up key posts among the nominees of each of the parties in the coalition. All three were able to build up a sound administration based on competence.

That the police force should have achieved this reputation of probity shows what can be done with proper leadership and guidance. The inspector-general, Yehezkel Sacher, has explained the difficulties of his understaffed, underpaid, and overworked force. His 5,300 men represent probably only about one-third of the actual requirements. They are so overworked that they cannot attend to crime prevention. During political demonstrations they have to spend hours in mediation between the demonstrators and whatever institutions are being demonstrated against. They have to lecture new immigrants on observance of the law—and they must be constantly wary of injuring the religious, social, sectarian, or political susceptibilities of any suspected offender. For all these services and duties, the pay of the police is lamentably poor.

Other departments which are largely exempt from general criticism are the Ministry of Agriculture and Development, which was until last June under Eshkol; the treasury and the agricultural and colonization branch of the Jewish Agency, also under Eshkol; and the absorption department of the Jewish Agency, which has been in the efficient hands of Giroa Josephtal, who modestly rejected the post of Finance Minister following Kaplan's resignation last May.

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THESE are the exceptions; the rule is very different. The majority of the government departments have not achieved that moral authority which comes from sound administration, together with the public's recognition that all comers are treated with a strict impartiality. The simple honest citizen who took his place in the queue and waited his turn soon discovered that this led nowhere; if you wanted anything at all you had to "organize" it, you had to make use of any friends you had in official positions. Naturally, those departments that had the most direct dealings with the public were most affected by this practice: the Treasury, the Ministry of Communications, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

These three departments were in effect in charge of the physical controls on which the everyday life of the individual and of the trading community was hinged. The administration of a wide range of controls is at the best of times a difficult operation, even in a country with a civil service tradition, such as Great Britain. In Israel there was neither the tradition nor the experience; there was, furthermore, the added difficulty of applying the controls under conditions of acute scarcity, where the slightest misapplication of the ration or the priorities would throw the whole system out of gear. The misapplication was not slight; nor was the disorder that resulted from it.

Thus the food ration was rarely honored on time; the public was forced to hoard by purchase in the black market and by the storing of imported gifts because it was never sure whether the official ration would be available or not. But such was the state of affairs that even when the ration was distributed a substantial portion disappeared from the shops and reappeared in the black market. Prices were controlled for a wide range of consumer goods. But even a perfunctory check-up revealed that, for example, a tailor would sell forty suits a month at the controlled price of forty Israeli pounds and some two hundred at anything from one hundred and twenty to two hundred pounds. Among the customers for the suits at what were in effect black market prices were respected government officials, party politicians, and others who ought to have set the tone.

The same story can be told of almost every sector of national life. Footwear is strictly rationed and price-controlled. The maximum price of shoes, last May, was eleven Israeli pounds—but you could go into most shops where shoes were available and buy a pair for fourteen Israeli pounds. This was not an overcharge or an under-the-counter transaction. It was quite openly explained: eleven pounds for the shoes and three for the ration points; for the allocation of the latter was quite insufficient for the average family.

And as you rose in the social scale so did the nature of the transgression of the law. The investors from abroad often made the most of their favorable opportunities. One large hotel company imported three times the amount of furniture required for their new building. The surplus went into the local black market. The promoters covered their entire initial outlay on the construction of the hotel from the proceeds of this transaction.

These are a few isolated incidents, but they are typical and they could be multiplied to the point of monotony. In all, there has been created a climate of conduct in which the public barely bothers with the formality of evading the law: the most blatant black market in Tel Aviv was not lurking in some dark and obscure side street but openly carried on in Carmel Market, which radiates from the center of the city's shopping district, and in Lilienblum Street in the very heart of business and banking activity. It was the same in Haifa, and not very different in Jerusalem. The black market was accepted as an auxiliary to the ration; no shame attached to it or to those who frequented it. The eight hundred "Economic Police" officials of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry were incapable of dealing with it.

THIS whole gamut of physical controls over trade and industry, bulk buying and

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food rationing, is concentrated in the hands of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under its Minister, Dov Joseph. It is established in the Palace Hotel in Jerusalem, has a formidable staff of some 3,000 officials, and in the public mind has become almost a law to itself. It does not enjoy a reputation for either efficiency or good relations with the public and perhaps more complaints are addressed to it than to any other sector of the government.

On a different level the Treasury also lost touch with the public. For many months before his death last July, Kaplan, the Finance Minister, had been seriously ailing. Horowitz, the Director-General, was compelled to spend most of his time away from his department, negotiating in London or Washington. He was also far from well. And Naphtali, the Deputy Minister, soon also succumbed to illness. Thus the department which was to control the economy of the state and make the day-to-day decisions affecting both state and business was for months without effective head and without its Director-General. Vacillation, indecision, and unreliability became its hallmark; goods were left lying around for months, projects were delayed and lost because of the incapacity of the Treasury to give a speedy reply to any letter or inquiry.

A typical example which demonstrates the extent of present administrative shortcomings can be seen from statistics of tax collection returns for the first nine months of 1951. Although the relatively poorly paid government employees make up only 7 per cent of the working population, they paid 13 per cent of the total income tax collected. Their tax is deducted at the source. The merchants and industrialists who have reaped the profits of inflation, and the workers in the very highly paid "services," have to a considerable extent escaped the income tax net. As a result of this, together with other factors, there is a steady drift away from essential jobs to the more profitable "Services and Professions."

Twenty-nine per cent of Israel's labor force is in "Services and Professions," as against 25 per cent of the United Kingdom's labor force, and 23 per cent of that of the United States.

From the beginning, the Israeli government offered little inducement to men of quality to join the government service. Pay was poor—the ratio between the highest and lowest paid job is 2½ : 1, as compared with a ratio of 12 : 1 in the United Kingdom. Promotion is difficult because most of the top places were filled by the party nominees or by the old hands. Consequently, the government did not attract the most suitable type of official—it had to take what it could get. The result has been appalling. The underpaid official often finishes his hard day's work and starts another job in the late afternoon to enable to him make ends meet. He has no time to study to make up for his inexperience, and no time to cultivate the graces that make for tradition in government service.

With the decline of moral standards, temptation has also come to some—though not many—officials in key position. One favor deserves another, why should others make all the easy money, and so on down the slippery slope. The public knows all this, talks about it—often in lurid exaggeration. Rumor and telltale add their quota. The result is the gulf between rulers and ruled. The people speak of the government and its departments as "they"; they no longer identify themselves with the government.

It is this cleavage which makes it so difficult to effectively take measures to meet the economic crisis. The distrust is so great, the attitude of *sauve qui peut* so developed, that it is virtually impossible to tackle the problem of incentives and to induce greater output.

My farmer friend was vivid and severe in emphasizing the issue:

"When I returned home," he said, "I told my friends that we seem to lack the ambition to work harder and to create much more. We do not impose the yoke of compulsion as do the Russians because we affect the symbols of democracy. We are not in a

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position to offer the baits which the Americans can offer their workers. So time may cure us, and I am not bargaining about the cost of the cure."

But for the moment labor and industry are entrenched in a firm position, protected by the political balance of power which the system of proportional representation has created. This has given Israel a stable government and a rigidly organized economy and government service at a time when a certain amount of instability might be more healthy. It has given Israel a government so weighed down with checks and balances that it can hardly move, and a coalition without common purpose intent principally on defending what each party holds.

The frustration arising from such a coalition has not only weakened the government but also its several parts. The socialist *élan* of Mapai, the labor party, has suffered from its preoccupation with power and from its inability to pursue a socialist policy in harness with anti-socialist coalition partners. The religious parties have probably done themselves incalculable harm by forcing religious observance on the country, not by persuasion but by the exploitation of their electoral position, and the *Kulturkampf* which might have been postponed for a generation has come appreciably nearer.

But most serious of all, when one considers the future, is the product that has been compounded of coalition government, political nepotism, and the lack of inducement to enter the government service: namely that crust of mediocrity in the governing organs of the nation—in the government, in the government departments, in the party leaderships, in the Jewish Agency, and in the Knesset. There are exceptions, of course, but they do not change the general condition.

This crust of mediocrity lies heavily on the nation; it stifles political life, economic daring, business incentive, and the increased productivity of labor. Above all else it prevents effective action to deal with the economic emergency and with the moral crisis. It also has had the effect of stultifying the successor generation. One looks in vain among the younger generation at the university, in the press, and in political life for the successors to the present leadership. In some ways the younger Palestine-born generation—the sabra—suffers now for the one-sidedness of its educational upbringing during the period of struggle against the Mandatory power. As the sabra comes into contact with the realities of running a country and as he comes into closer contact with foreign countries, his self-assurance is assailed by doubts and uncertainties. Many have lost faith in their old values and they have not yet found new ones attuned to the new conditions of an independent state with all its difficulties and shortcomings. This can be seen at the university in Jerusalem and in the settlements throughout the country, where many of the younger men have become cynical, others have become interested only in personal acquisition and many, as a form of escapism, are concentrating their attention on international politics almost to the virtual exclusion of the immediate problems. This is the case of many members of Mapam and of a group of intellectuals attached to the Hebrew University who prefer to discuss ways to promote a "Third Force" world ideology rather than come to grips with their problems nearer home.

This then is the case against Israel's governing hierarchy: it embraces the whole complex network of government, administration, parties, the Knesset, the Jewish Agency—they are all included in the popular indictment. What then is the case *for* the government?

An Oxford professor once described Israel as the first pre-fabricated state. But there was no pre-fabricated machinery to run it. Figures bear eloquent witness to the nature of this problem.

At the last Knesset elections some 700,000 adult men and women exercised their right to vote; but of these, classical Zionists—that is, Zionist pioneers in Israel as against Israeli nationalists or simply citizens of Israel or Jews in Israel—made up no more than 50,000.

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Just as during the actual period of fighting in 1948 a small elite—a few thousands, probably not more than 5 per cent of the total adult population—in fact secured the state, so now the attempt to consolidate the State of Israel is conducted largely by proxy. A hard-pressed government, staffed largely by the old Zionist core, is attempting to create a state for world Jewry and for the hundreds of thousands who have come in the last few years.

The Jews outside give generously; they visit Israel; some give their advice; they help Israel in a great many ways; but they do not become an integral part of it. Israel needs urgently 25,000 trained professional workers and administrators; she will be lucky if she gets 2,500 over the next two or three years from the Western world. The inexperienced, untrained, and unprofessional improvisers in the country must therefore step into the breach.

Nor has their problem been made any easier by the character of the "ingathered exiles." A great many of these have come to Israel not to pioneer but to relax from the perils of their past; they have come home and they want their reward. Many have initiative and enterprise and they make the most of these characteristics which helped them in the past to survive. They do not make for an administrator's paradise. They are interested only in picking the fruits of Zionism; they are less concerned with the tree.

And then there are those who have lived in Palestine for many years—and lived relatively well. Now that they have become part of the new nation and the glamor has worn off, they are again primarily concerned to insure their living and their living standards; if government regulations stand in their way, they will find means to get around them. This applies not only to business people but also to officials of powerful institutions, or to members of privileged monopolies, such as some of the transport cooperatives.

All this, then, has tended to swamp the Zionist minority. The six thousand young men who did not return from the battlefields of 1948—their absence is now painfully felt. Europe's Zionist Jews; they too were decimated—they and the Palestine casualties form a missing generation of Zionists.

The arguments adduced in support of the government, as well as those which are charged against it, only compound the gravity of Ben Gurion's crisis.

THE weak coalition government ties the hands of a naturally decisive and aggressive Prime Minister in dealing with all other problems—even the economic ones. Ben Gurion was clearly conscious of this when he discussed recently the desirability of electoral reform with each of the party representatives. The system of proportional representation bequeathed to Israel by the United Nations Assembly puts a premium on small parties and splinter groups, and makes certain that government only by coalition is possible. Ben Gurion sounded the parties as to their willingness to switch to the British electoral system with possibly some slight variations. The consequences of such a change could be forecast with some certainty. It would lead to the return in the first instance of Ben Gurion's Mapai with a clear majority in the Knesset, and the General Zionists as the largest opposition party. It would probably wipe out altogether most of the smaller parties and reduce the representation of Mapam and Herut.

There is no question that Ben Gurion and Mapai would be the chief beneficiaries of an electoral reform, and, presumably because of this, every party leader of every party with whom Ben Gurion negotiated turned down the proposal out of hand. The question whether at the present juncture the imperative need of the state—as distinct from the parties—was for a strong democratic government apparently played no part in their decision.

Mapai has of course largely itself to blame if the prospect of its unhampered rule is not greeted by unqualified joy. Mapai, Ben Gurion's own party, is in some ways also his biggest worry. The party, through the General Labor Federation, the Histadrut,

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which it dominates, has become far more powerful in the life of the country than it is in the Knesset. The opponents of Mapai point to this power as one of the chief causes of Israel's tribulation, but that is an oversimplification. With all its faults—and they are neither few nor negligible—Mapai remains the hard core of the country. Its achievements and its contribution to the making of Israel are unquestionable.

But there is a problem which springs from this strength, and the way in which it has been used. There is, again and foremost, the charge of nepotism or political patronage which Mapai has unashamedly practiced to staff key posts in government, industry, and economy with its loyal party members or partisans. As a result, many offices have been filled with the equivalent of inexperienced but loyal party hacks while trained experts have been passed over. The practice runs like a red thread right through the country's life. It has caused much bitterness and cynicism, and considerable inefficiency.

Mapai, in answer, makes no virtue of its practice but claims political necessity in the interests of the state. It derides those who would prefer to practice liberal selection and see the power of labor undermined. That in Mapai's view would do more to undermine the fundamental strength of Israel than any amount of inefficiency and favoritism.

Having thus established an adequate reason for its current practice—which at least has convinced most of its supporters—Mapai and the Histadrut have continued to pursue their path without much regard for others—or for the national consequences. One result is that some of the great organizations built up by the labor movement and some of the cooperatives, which in the past were popular heroes and showpieces for all visitors to see, are now anathema to the general public, particularly some of the transport cooperatives which virtually control all public transport. The cost of transportation has increased enormously, the service has materially declined, and altogether the relationship of the cooperative to the public has become distinctly bad. The same is true in varying degree with such organizations as Tnuva, the cooperative dairy shops, Solel Boneh, the mammoth contractors, and a good many others.

Somehow Ben Gurion has to manage to base his policies on the support of Mapai—without, however, subscribing to all the policies of his own party. He finds it necessary to press increasingly for policies which may offend the Mapai sectional interest—such measures, for example, as control of the cost-of-living bonus, the proposed wage-freeze, and a host of others. Thus, he must manage to master his own supporters before he can embark on his hoped-for strong government based on a majority party.

FACED with a threatening deadlock in his effort to tackle the root of the problem, Ben Gurion changed his tactics and returned to his own tried method. He had found in recent years that the only way he could achieve drastic results was to take over himself. He took over the army in 1948 and turned it from a partisan force with a variety of commands into a disciplined organization; as his defense lieutenant he picked Levi Eshkol, and as his chief agent in the provision of arms in Europe he chose Ehud Avriel, who was then in Prague.

Later, when "development" became the chief preoccupation, Eshkol was made Minister of Agriculture and Development and Avriel was brought home to become the Director-General of the Prime Minister's office in charge of the allocation of the American grant-in-aid. And now, faced by this latest and gravest crisis, Ben Gurion has overcome his lack of interest in and distaste for economics, and has made his lieutenant Eshkol Minister of Finance; his other aide, Avriel, he sent with Eshkol to the Treasury as Director-General. He thus signaled not any really new economic policy, but his recognition that for the moment administration has become more important than policy, and that only by sound administration can the government regain its moral standing in the country.

But for Ben Gurion this is clearly only

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an incidental side issue in the much larger drama that he is helping to unfold. Perhaps, like Moses, he sees the solution only with the next generation that has been born free and uninhibited by the slave mentality of the Jews who came out of bondage. One senses this larger scene in his room in the Prime Minister's office: the large map from Casablanca to Pakistan showing in rose-tinted coloring the vast Moslem sea that surrounds the little green spot in the center that is Israel. That clearly is his perspective and his preoccupation—the challenge of the emergent Arab in a generation, or perhaps two. Can Israel meet that challenge by developing within her narrow confines a technical ability and a productive capacity equal to that of the best in the world? It is a vision that compensates for much of the present shortcomings, but it does not solve them. It adds also one further aspect to Ben Gurion's crisis: his sights are raised so high that he often does not notice how many toes he treads on in his progress.

He carefully avoids only one toe—that of the army. And no consideration of present-day Israel is complete without a brief appreciation of its present role. It has remained surprisingly isolated from the decline of moral standards; it has been deliberately kept away from any possible contagion. Discipline has been strict, the administration unbending to the point of harshness. But the army has never been accused of either favoritism or nepotism. It intervened effectively last winter to save the immigrants from flooded camps and the administrative chaos that followed. But its commander, General Yigal Yadin, has turned firmly against all proposals for further army intervention in the affairs of the state. There have been not a few voices among the younger officers urging that the army should take over and introduce order into the administrative chaos of the civilians, that it should supervise the distribution of rations, and generally make up for the deficiencies of party government. But Yadin has not only rejected, he also denounced all such propositions as the short cut to Levantinism, and the destruction of all hope of a democratic society in Israel.

THIS then is Ben Gurion's crisis in its many variations. It is not something which a miraculous restoration of the balance of payments alone can cure, or which can be explained away facilely by reference to the novelty and brevity of the state's existence. The Jews are an experienced people; it is now to be seen whether they can create the prerequisites of a free state.

Israel, after all, is the test by which Jews the world over will be judged, and it is in Israel that the decision will fall whether Jews will be respected or otherwise. Ben Gurion's crisis is therefore also the crisis of every Jew, whether he likes it or not, whether he wants it or not. "For they were born into the world," Thucydides wrote, "to take no rest themselves and to give none to others."

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SOME MEMORIES OF JOHN DEWEY

1859-1952

SIDNEY HOOK

JOHN DEWEY is dead. The warm husky voice through which spoke the liberal conscience of America is silent. He leaves behind him no monument in stone, no empire, fortune, or foundation. Yet his bequest is immense and imponderable. The experience of millions of American children is richer and happier for his having lived. And to every adult mind he has offered a reasoned and reasonable faith by which to live.

John Dewey entered the world at the height of the Victorian era. He left it when many fear the beginning of a new dark age. Yet in the long years I knew him, he never lost nerve, never became hysterical over real or fancied dangers. He had seen mankind face and cross too many "crossroads" to be disturbed by another. He was much less optimistic in his talk than in his writing. "Genuine progress," he once said, "comes hard and is uncertain; but it is at least possible." Up until the last year or two of his illness, whenever we met, it was in the spirit of "Well, what's next on the agenda?" There was always a project for some committee, an article or book to be talked over, a problem to be thought out, a reply composed to the perennial critics, an open letter or petition drafted.

From his own life Dewey had learned that the worst things which happen to us are the things we can't worry about, the unexpected and unprepared for, like the death of two of his young children whom he mourned with a deep, and almost womanly, intensity that was hardly affected by the passage of years. He seemed to believe that what we worry about we usually can do something about, if by worry we mean not a neurotic anxiety but patient reflection. For example, he urged us in 1942 to worry about the Soviet Union's postwar activities when Stalin was being uncritically glorified in the West.

John Dewey's ideas and his personality were inseparable. But at the present moment it is as a human being that I want to write about him, not as a philosopher. There was something rather paradoxical about his personality. He was naturally shy, reticent, and undemonstrative in manner, but he had a great appreciation of vitality in people. So long as it did not express itself in cruelty, he admired passion, enthusiasm, color, and originality in others. He preferred the openness, sincerity, and gusto of the Italian temperament to the cold, exaggerated courtesy of the French which he used to say often cloaked egoistic insularity and profound unconcern towards others. Not that it made any difference in his own attitude towards individuals. I have never known anybody so free of racial or national snobbery. He once told me that he thought COMMENTARY was the best magazine in the country. I asked him if he didn't think it contained too many articles on Jewish themes in terms of his own taste and preoccupations. "No," he said, "not if they have the same quality as those of more general interest." He never was satisfied with any explanation of the intense concern of a relatively disproportionate number of Jews with intellectual matters, which, of course, he admired. Religion, including the Jewish

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"THESE words were written far from New York under the spell of the news about John Dewey's death," writes SIDNEY HOOK, recognized as one of the foremost interpreters and continuators of Dewey's philosophy, and an intimate friend. Dr. Dewey died on June 1, 1952; he would have celebrated his ninety-third birthday this October. Dr. Hook is chairman of the philosophy department of New York University, and the author, among other works, of *John Dewey: An Intellectual Portrait.*

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religion, left him cold. Perhaps his own upbringing had something to do with this; it was intensely pietistic, especially on his mother's side.

IN A rare, reminiscent mood, he once recounted something of his religious development, and some embarrassing episodes when he was a boy. His mother was the religious member of the family, his father the quizzical and humorous one. "My mother was converted to Evangelism which in practice was something worse than Puritanism. She was continuously asking me and my brother—sometimes before others—'Are you right with Jesus? Have you prayed to God for forgiveness?' It tended to induce in us a sense of guilt and at the same time irritation because of the triviality of the occasions on which she questioned us.

"I recall being told that my mother was converted to Evangelism while visiting a cousin in another city in which her father happened to be residing at the time. My grandfather's family belonged to the Universalist persuasion and my mother, originally, too. On this visit, however, she spent a great deal of time with an Evangelical friend. And my grandfather wrote warning our immediate family that unless someone took things in hand, my mother who arrived as a Universalist would return as a Partialist. She did." (A Partialist was one who did not believe that everyone could be saved.)

Dewey's feeling about religious existentialism, including the Niebuhrian variety, was that it was "the same old stuff." He didn't think it would appeal to anybody who had actually lived through, and outgrown, traditional religious experience. Like the Freudians, the existentialists saw things that were true but instead of explaining them, Dewey complained, they made mysteries of them. Referring to Niebuhr's ideas he once said: "A man doesn't *have* to be an s.o.b. S.o.b.'s are made, not born." He was more sympathetic to Heidegger whom he knew only from secondary accounts. After listening to a report on Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* when I returned from Germany in 1929, he remarked: "It sounds like a description of 'the situation' [one of Dewey's central concepts] in transcendental German."

Secular Jewish life interested Dewey very much and he was impressed by some of the leaders of the Jewish labor movement in New York, particularly Charney Vladeck, Abe Cahan, Dubinsky, J. B. S. Hardman, and others, whom he met in the series of movements to organize a third party. "When they think about specific problems, their minds are wonderfully fluid and they exemplify the pragmatic method in action." Distrustful of oratory, he nonetheless liked the mixture of sense, sentiment, and eloquence in their speeches. Old-line Social Democracy with its fixed and rigid categories he thought was a species of metaphysics. The only time he seemed to be baffled by Jews was in 1940. He told me that, try as he might, he could not understand how Jewish Communists could support the Nazi-Soviet pact, whose spirit, if not letter, spelled their liquidation. And by that time, in virtue of his experience in Mexico, Dewey was something of an expert on the Communist movement and the varieties of its motivations. But the spectacle of self-immolating fanaticism remained puzzling to him.

DEWEY was not a scintillating conversationalist. Most people think *as* they speak and are not always sure of their thought until they have finished their sentences. Dewey always seemed to think *before* he spoke, so that sometimes there would be long gaps between comment and reply. If one chattered on in hopes of striking a quicker vein of response on some other theme, Dewey would smile at the strategy but always return to the original point. He was not distracted easily.

If shrewdness is an awareness of how personal interest can exploit possibilities, then few people realized how shrewd a Yankee Dewey was. He knew when he was being buttered up, he knew how self-interest concealed itself behind public interest, he knew what people were generally after, sometimes when they were not conscious of it them-

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selves. Nonetheless there was a simplicity and trustfulness about him, almost a calculated naivety in his relations with people whose ulterior motives were rather transparent. It was as if he were aware of the many ways a person could deceive or disappoint him and yet made that person feel he had perfect confidence in him. He bet on people and was rarely let down. Perhaps this is a testimony to John Dewey, rather than to the method of implicit and excessive confidence in the goodness and capacity of others.

Dewey encouraged and over-encouraged many who showed a glint of promise. Whatever the quality of their work, they achieved more because of his apparent faith in them. This was no pedagogic device, however. It goes back to his awareness of possibilities in things and to a memory of how he got his own start in philosophy. Before going on to do graduate work at Johns Hopkins, Dewey sent a philosophical essay he had written to Harris, the editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. "Harris wrote me," he recalled as his eyes lit up with an amused twinkle, "that my first effort in philosophy was a gem of the purest water. That had a great influence in my decision to go into philosophy."

Dewey never gossiped, and although with the exuberance of youth I used to press him hard on men and events he had known intimately, except once or twice he never gave way. He confessed to some intellectual disappointment with the department of philosophy at Columbia University and he told me several times that he was sorry he had let Coss and Woodbridge run its affairs. But he would go out of his way to praise the work of individual members of the department whenever he could find an occasion.

JOHN DEWEY was not a saint: and he was always suspicious of terms like "saintliness" and "spirituality." There were people he disliked but in his dealings with them he was fair to a fault. There were three people whom he particularly disliked. There may have been others but these are the only ones I can recall in the last twenty-five years. One was the editor of a series of books whose whole project depended upon Dewey's favor. Dewey was repelled by the fawning way he signed his letters and the unctuous air of humbleness with which he reacted every time Dewey attempted to withdraw from what was a reluctant, tentative commitment. "Only a cruel person, a bully towards those who are weaker, writes and acts like that." But since the man pleaded that his whole career depended upon Dewey's consent, he yielded, much to his later regret.

Mortimer Adler was another person Dewey disliked. But not for the reasons given by *Time* magazine in its cover-story on Adler. According to that story, Adler, then a student at Columbia, read a paper on God and psychology rather critical of Dewey. In the midst of it, Dewey is supposed, red-faced and angry, to have jumped to his feet, shouted, "No one is going to tell *me* how to love God," and rushed from the room. Dewey was also said to have kept Adler from getting a job at Columbia and was pictured as begging Adler to desist from writing him devastating letters refuting his philosophy. Underneath a picture of Dewey, *Time* printed the rhetorical question: "Worse than Hitler?" derived from Adler's essay on "God and the Professors" in 1939. Dewey's life was approaching its end when the story in *Time* appeared. Although he was immune to criticism of that sort, I am glad he never saw it.

This portrait of Dewey as feuding with and persecuting a student could not be anything but wildly absurd to everyone who knew Dewey. Dewey disliked Adler's exhibitionism and what he believed was a lack of serious respect for truth about fact. He never gainsaid his dialectical talents, but thought that in his relation to others he was too much like a pushy young college debater in training, ready to refute what others said no matter what they believed, and even before they had spoken. No one ever heard Dewey shout at a philosophy meeting or any other meeting, and the truth about the meeting in question is that Dewey, as was his wont, asked only one mild question: whether God was

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essence or existence, to which Adler made a garrulous but not clear reply. Dewey had nothing to do with appointments at Columbia, and even if Adler had been an enthusiastic follower of Dewey's there is every indication that J. J. Coss would have kept him out of the department on personal grounds, as he did others. But it is characteristic that despite his dislike of Adler's manner, Dewey went out of his way to write a highly complimentary review of Adler's first book on *Dialectic;* I was taken aback because I was getting ready to publish a blockbuster on Adler. Dewey smiled when he read my manuscript (most of which I incorporated in an article on "What Is Dialectic?"), agreed that my criticisms were valid, but suggested that I had overlooked some good things in Adler and that he would learn and grow. Adler did grow. From believing that all positions were equally valid, an extreme voluntarist doctrine, he developed a view whose logical corollary could easily take the form of a justification of the death sentence for heresy in theology and philosophy. Indeed, he once defended this thesis in a lecture at Cooper Union, though subsequently he maintained that he had spoken in a semi-humorous vein. But in no way humorous was his call for the purging from American educational institutions of all positivists, pragmatists, and naturalists as more of a threat to American democracy than Hitler—and presumably Stalin. But I learned from Dewey the danger of passing final judgments about human beings, their interests, capacities, and characters so long as they were still alive. For all his illuminating discussion about habit, his approach to particular individuals seemed to assume that they were endowed with an indefinite plasticity. He once wryly observed that he had seen strange somersaults in this world. Fond as he was of Max Eastman, he was rather distressed when Eastman swung to an extreme defense of *laissez-faire* in economics. Lowering his voice as if he feared it would hurt Max's feelings, who was a thousand miles distant at the time, he said, "It really isn't necessary to go so far to atone for a too generous enthusiasm."

THE man whom Dewey personally disliked most was someone he knew I admired greatly though I never shared his philosophy except for a few months as a young student. That man was Bertrand Russell. Russell professed a deep esteem for Dewey but delighted in saying the most malicious things about him. In print he never lost an opportunity to make exaggerated criticisms of Dewey's thought, sometimes of a contradictory character. No matter how often misunderstandings would be pointed out to him, he would return to them, ending up with the implication that any view such as Bacon's which regarded knowledge as a form of power, or Marx's that the function of philosophy was not only to interpret the world but also to change it, or Dewey's that every viable theory functioned as an instrument to reconstruct a situation, represented a kind of cosmic fascism. But what riled Dewey was not Russell's criticisms but his frequent descriptions of Dewey's variety of pragmatism, which Dewey—and occasionally even Russell himself—considered to be an extension of the ethics and logic of scientific inquiry, as a form of vulgar commercialism. "I shall never forgive Bertrand Russell," he said with uncustomary firmness, "for the persistence with which he has repeated his derogatory remarks about pragmatism as a form of commercialism. He knows better."

The whole story cannot be told here, but Dewey's feelings about Russell began in China when Russell insisted upon calling on the Christian missionaries with, at the time, his unwed secretary then in an advanced state of pregnancy, in order to broaden their cultural horizon. What concerned Dewey was Russell's insensitiveness to other people's feelings. He believed that there was a streak of cruelty in Russell and an aristocratic disdain for the sensibilities of other human beings outside of his class. Russell's animus against Dewey followed his awareness of Dewey's coldness.

Nonetheless Dewey threw himself into the struggle for the defense of Russell at the time of the disgraceful incident at City College, in which a timorous mayor yielded to

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the fantastic charge that because of Russell's views on marriage and divorce, he would corrupt the morals of a daughter of a Brooklyn housewife if he taught mathematical logic to the all-boys' upper division of City College in Manhattan. He also grasped the issue by its nettles and wrote an exposition of Russell's doctrines on love, marriage, and divorce to show that, right or wrong, they could not be characterized as "obscene" or "immoral" and that their assertion was no "damnable felony," as Judge McGeehan held. After Russell was barred, Dewey induced Alfred Barnes to give Russell a professorship at the Barnes Foundation. Russell was surprised and touched by Dewey's activity in his behalf. But his career at the Barnes Foundation ended in a fiasco—so in the end he remained unmollified and, if anything, more caustic against Dewey than ever.

Dewey was puzzled by my constant championship of Russell, and my failure to take public issue with the perfectly outrageous things Russell was saying and writing about pragmatism which I, mistakenly I now believe, dismissed as inconsequential. In a conversation I once said, "Oh, of course, Russell is irresponsible." Dewey stopped me and in earnest tones replied, "Sidney, that's a pretty serious thing to say about anyone." I still believe that Russell was and is a fundamentally irresponsible person, even as a thinker, but I couldn't communicate properly to Dewey my feeling that it was not the whole story considering Russell's great courage, his fresh and effervescent mind, his penetrating insights and remarkable conversational gifts, and the sense of *bonhomie* he injected into any group almost in the way in which a gay, old, and witty reprobate becomes the life of the party. Dewey never actually said that fun and philosophy didn't mix but he felt that there were some contexts in which a joke or a wisecrack was a rude evasion of the issue.

DEWEY used to say that those who had no respect for his philosophy praised his character but that he himself thought more could be said for his philosophy than for his character. Yet his critics were not wrong about his character even though they did less than justice to his philosophy. Dewey's goodness was so genuine, constant, and sustained, even under provocation, that I sometimes found it somewhat oppressive. I confess I used to keep a specially sharp lookout for anything mean or petty in word and action so that I could grasp him by the small side, so to speak, by which we reduce men of greatness to our own dimension and make it possible to live easily with them. It was almost with relief that I discovered a serious shortcoming in him. That was his indulgent friendship for Albert C. Barnes.

Barnes was a man of considerable gifts as a critic of painting but arbitrary, brutal, and vindictive in his personal relationships. He used his money, and even his museum, as a means of lording it over people more decent than himself. His temper knew no restraint. I recall one evening at his museum in the presence of Dewey, Bullitt, and some other people whom he hardly knew, when he publicly humiliated a close member of his family in unbridled language because she hadn't procured the right kind of glasses for one of the drinks. Barnes made a profession of complete devotion to the principles of Dewey's philosophy, especially his philosophy of democracy. But there never was a man more undemocratic in his personal way of life, which for Dewey was the essence of democracy.

Although I myself had few dealings with Barnes, I would hear about his exploits from individuals who worked for him and from friends to whom he not only denied access to his tax-exempt museum but insulted to boot. Dewey would often be appealed to when Barnes committed an act of injustice grosser than usual, and he was the only person who had any influence over him, even if it merely meant softening Barnes' unjustified rage against an innocent victim.

At different times I would challenge Dewey on why he put up with Barnes. Dewey would explain Barnes as a man with an inferiority complex—he had originally been

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a pugilist—and claimed that since he was the only person who could talk back to Barnes and exercise any restraint on him, it wouldn't improve Barnes to break off with him. In addition, he confessed that he found his company interesting especially when he talked about pictures, and that he owed him an intellectual debt. I could not see, however, that Dewey achieved much with Barnes. Every time Barnes got into a scrape as a result of browbeating, insulting, or cheating someone, he tried to drag Dewey into it. He was exploiting Dewey and Dewey didn't seem to care.

When Barnes fired Russell I became, to Barnes' great fury, a partisan of Russell's in the controversy, and helped arrange for Russell a series of lectures at the Rand School, since at the time he had no other source of income. Barnes never forgave me and sought to pay me back. As I learned subsequently, he sent the sister of his secretary to sit in on a course of mine in contemporary philosophy at the New School on an evening when I was lecturing on Bertrand Russell. At the close she kept pressing me to discuss the Russell-Barnes episode, which I dismissed as of no philosophical importance. She turned over her notes to Barnes who apparently edited them and sent them to Dewey with a letter denouncing me for having "betrayed" Dewey. According to the notes I had said that Russell was the most eminent philosopher of his time. What I had actually said was that Russell was the most eminent philosopher of mathematics and writer of philosophic prose of our time.

Even at that, Dewey was amused rather than repelled by Barnes' conduct. What was more surprising, he told me that although Barnes had no legal case against Russell in his summary dismissal, he had a moral case because Russell had promised, in return for an extra two thousand dollars, to do no outside institutional lecturing. I knew that Russell was always greedy when it came to money. (it was for a few dollars more that he threw up his most congenial post at UCLA, to go to City College and disaster) and it was during this time that he was writing on any subject he would be paid for, like his piece on "What to Do When You Are in Love with a Married Man" for *Glamour* magazine. The only evidence Dewey had that Russell made such a promise was Barnes' word. Russell denied it and, so far as I know, Russell has never lied in his own behalf. Barnes in the meantime was telling all and sundry that he had fired Russell with Dewey's knowledge and advice! Dewey's indulgence towards Barnes in this and similar situations is the only time in the twenty-five years I knew him that I felt his behavior to be ambiguous. But I must confess that I was a little glad to see this human weakness in him along with those occasional slight unsaintlike traces of irritation with those who wanted to integrate *his* insights into other philosophical systems instead of integrating others' insights into the basic Deweyan position.

Although Dewey was always fearful of hurting others, in which he was markedly different from Russell, who could be ruthless, he knew no fear for himself—either physical or moral. This was demonstrated at the time he decided to go to Mexico as head of the Commission of Inquiry into the Moscow Trials. The whole story is complicated and this is not the place to tell it. Scarcely anyone knows the intensity and variety of the pressures he had to withstand, not least from the members of his immediate family, some of whom feared he might be killed in the excitable political milieu of Mexico City. I have been held responsible for his going to Mexico. But although Dewey asked my advice, I never urged him to accept the invitation. Nor did the histrionic appeal by one of the Trotskyist leaders—who, incidentally, later viciously attacked Dewey when he criticized both Trotskyism and Stalinism—influence his decision. The simple truth of the matter is that Dewey made up his mind irrevocably only after he became aware of the efforts and far-flung stratagems of the Communist party to *prevent* him from going.

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These efforts included separate visits from a half-dozen friends to warn him against my presumed influence, which actually had been limited to my soliciting his signature for the organization of the committee to discover the truth about the Moscow Trials. The stratagems included an offer of a bribe, in the form of a "junket tour" first-class to the Soviet Union to revisit the schools. It was made by R., a singer of minor talent, who was very active in the cultural periphery of the Communist party and later identified as a member of the GPU. I can still hear his lilting voice in its foreign English replying to Dewey's explanation that he couldn't go on the tour because he was planning to leave for Mexico to conduct hearings on the Trotsky case: "Trot-sky! Stal-in! We're not interested in such matters, dear Professor Dewey. Ten years ago you came and saw the schools of the Soviet Union: now it is time to come and give another look. VOKS doesn't care about Trotsky or Stalin. It cares only that you should come—and soon. This month or next. First-class accommodations all the way and back."

John Dewey had always been a problem for the Communist party—from the time it became aware of the importance of working among American intellectuals and particularly during the days of the Popular Front. It realized that it could not capture the liberal movement unless it had John Dewey in tow. So long as he stayed out of its chief fronts or was critical, the hegemony of the Communist party over large sections of American liberal opinion was incomplete or threatened. Until this time, he had not taken a hostile position to the Soviet Union and was one of the earliest public figures to call for its recognition. If it could succeed in duping Dewey (as it later did Franz Boas for whom Roosevelt was a "warmonger" in 1940), there was hardly anything it could not successfully initiate in the United States. As far back as 1932 when Browder was wooing me ardently, though worried about my epistemological deviations, I once asked him why he was taking so much time to win me over and running the risk of trouble with Foster, who was not really reconciled to Stalin's giving the reins of power to Browder, and with Sam Don, a Gletkin type of party functionary who had just come from the Lenin school, philosophically illiterate but full of orthodox zeal. "You are a much more important man than you think," replied Browder. Later on I realized he wasn't thinking of me but of Dewey. I was important primarily as the presumed bridge to Dewey.

The news that Dewey was going to Mexico threw the top ranks of the Communist party into panic. It also disturbed the Kremlin, for the United States was the only country in which the Moscow Trials had met with critical opposition, and Stalin never underestimated Trotsky's intelligence and oratorical talents. He probably feared the kind of testimony Trotsky would give. There is some evidence that another Moscow trial was being planned in which Robinson, a minor agent in the GPU, and Rubens, his American wife, would try to implicate Dewey in order to discredit his Commission's report. Meantime the American Communist party, having failed to capture Dewey or to call him off by weight of visits and delegations, decided to destroy him intellectually. They circulated the legend that Dewey, who was approaching eighty, was senile, that, having lost all capacity for coherent discourse, he signed things blindly without reading them. Dewey dealt this legend a fatal blow by publishing in the same year as the Commission's report his monumental *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*. From that time on the only epithet left to the Communist party in attacking Dewey, except during the period of the Nazi-Soviet pact, was "fascist."

DEWEY was a man of no pride—no pride of dress, literary style, social origins, or intellectual achievement. He was prepared to learn from anyone. He rarely kept copies of his voluminous correspondence, and then not for long. He always thought of his philosophy as unfinished even when he became aware of its systematic character. He was a

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keen dialectician, and his criticisms were perhaps more dialectical than his philosophy gives him a right to be. But he took no joy in argument as such and was always interested in a man's vision or in a problem.

Dewey always used to say that his intelligence was too abstract—but what he meant by that was that he had difficulty in thinking of concrete dramatic illustrations to drive home general principles. His writing often suffers from this lack of concreteness and he was exaggeratedly grateful for *concrete* suggestions. But what stands out most vividly in my mind about Dewey's intellectual habits is the freshness of his thinking, the variety of starts he would make, and his own sense of the adventure of thinking. He never seemed to be moving towards a preconceived solution. And although many of his new starts ended in nothing but new ways of saying what he had said before, it always came as something of a surprise to him that this should be so. But his whole career showed evidences of change of intellectual emphasis and sometimes of position. Two months after his ninetieth birthday had been celebrated he remarked to me: "Only in the last two years have I come to see the real drift and hang of the various positions I have taken."

This explains in part why Dewey never felt bound by earlier formulations of his position and why he never felt responsible for those who had fixedly accepted those formulations or conclusions and applied them without reference to the corrective process of experiment itself. He was sympathetic to the many progressive educators who invoked his name for the things they were doing, particularly because of the ferocity of the attack on them by reactionaries. But he never intellectually approved of the enthusiasts and faddists, "the Deweyites of progressive education," precisely because, as he once put it, they weren't experimental enough, that is, they didn't learn from the outcome of their own experiments but clung to some of the fetishistic catchwords and practices that once were presented hypothetically. He always kept saying that progressive education was the most difficult kind of education to introduce properly. His conception of progressive education was not incompatible with curricular prescriptions—subject matter which every student, particularly at the college level, should be expected to learn—provided motivation and interest had been properly aroused. Although in the beginning he was dubious about the wisdom of excluding members of the Communist party from teaching in colleges, when he examined the documentation of their commitment and behavior he agreed that they were *prima facie* unemployable. But he characteristically insisted that this should not be a blind rule. There might be exceptions.

MORRIS R. COHEN once vigorously complained to me about my article-review of his *Reasons and Nature*. I had thought I was generous, and perhaps more. To defend myself I told him Dewey had remarked that until reading my article he had not known that Cohen had a philosophy but had always considered him a man very learned in the history of other people's opinions about philosophical problems. Cohen admitted there was something in what Dewey said, but retorted: "And the trouble with Dewey is that *he* discusses philosophical problems as if no one had ever discussed them before." There was some truth in this, though more to Dewey's credit than to his discredit. Thoroughly grounded in the history of ideas, he never substituted history for analysis.

Cohen was one of those who had a great admiration for Dewey's character and almost none for his philosophy. But I never was convinced that Cohen had read Dewey sympathetically or tried to think through the kind of problems Dewey was interested in. Those who took their undergraduate work with Cohen were not likely to be sympathetic to Dewey in the light of Cohen's exposition and criticism unless they continued in the field. Although Cohen boasted that he neither had nor wished to have disciples, he was quite piqued when any of his students

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abandoned his ambiguous rationalism for the experimental naturalism of Peirce and Dewey.

Temperamentally I have always found Russell and Cohen more congenial than Dewey. They are philosophers of the clean line, incisive, witty, rarely hesitant about sacrificing the dull or exact truth for the sake of a *bon mot*. But I came to see that Cohen had little original vision and that he was primarily an excellent judicial critic rather than an interpretive one. When Cohen got through criticizing almost any great contemporary thinker, one asked oneself: how could any philosopher be such an ass as to believe such stuff? The truth was that most of the time he didn't. Russell has many visions but in the end they do not seem to add up to a vision of the actual world with its genuine possibilities for good or evil, as it is lived and experienced. The world is too thick for him and because it has no one pattern, he has long since given it up as a higgledy-piggledy mess. Emotionally, he has remained a Platonist *malgré lui,* an alien from the pure world of mathematics but still not at home in the historical world.

PERHAPS the secret of Dewey's personality is that there is no secret. There were no hidden ambitions, no vain regrets, no sense of being anything more than a citizen, a neighbor, a teacher, a friend—and a philosopher. He was a good man—sometimes too good in the sense that he would let his kindness influence his intellectual decisions.

I worked closely with him on the manuscript of his *A Common Faith*. It is a thoroughly naturalistic approach to religion. The only thing I disagreed with was his use of the term "God" for faith in the validity of moral ideals. Dewey's God is not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; nor of Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas, nor of Spinoza, Kant, or Hegel; nor of James or Schiller. Why then use it, I asked. He argued that the term had no unequivocal meaning in the history of thought; that there was no danger of its being misunderstood (in which he was shortly proved wrong); and that there was no reason why its emotive associations of the sacred, profound, and ultimate should be surrendered to the supernaturalist, especially since for him not religion but the religious experience is central. All this seemed to me to be legitimate if not sufficient grounds. But then he added something which men like Russell or Cohen would never have dreamed of saying: "Besides there are so many people who would feel bewildered if not hurt were they denied the intellectual right to use the term 'God.' They are not in the churches, they believe what I believe, they would feel a loss if they could not speak of God. Why then shouldn't I use the term?"

As far as his ideas are concerned, I am not sure that I have always understood Dewey, but the more I reflect the more confident I am that he is right in general outline and wrong in many details. After he had once expressed what seemed to me more than a conventional appreciation of something I had written, I turned to him and asked what he really saw in my stuff, since I felt I was merely developing ideas I had learned from him. An unfriendly critic had even referred to me as "Dewey's bulldog." I treasure his remark more than the many accolades he has written me, particularly since I have sometimes been charged with reading my own views into Dewey and Dewey's views into Marx. "No, Sidney," was his gentle response, "it's more than that. When I read you, I understand myself better." Spoken as only John Dewey would.

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AFTER ALL, I WAS ONLY SEVENTEEN!

A Story

GUENTHER ANDERS

I MET L. at T.'s home. L. is an architect, Jewish, lost his family at Auschwitz; after spending ten years, first in camps, then in hegiras to various countries, he came back to Vienna in 1948. Understandably, he has a bit of a reputation for knowing all the angles about exit and entrance visas, residence permits, etc. Here is the story he told us:

About three weeks ago Huber, one of my draftsmen, walked into the office. A reliable chap, middle thirties I should think. He asked if I could spare a few minutes. He and a group of other technicians were thinking of leaving Austria to settle in Australia. He could find work there on one of the large settlement projects.

"Congratulations," I said. "So you've come to say goodbye?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I thought perhaps you might be able to give me some advice."

"Go ahead."

He hesitated a moment. Then: "They refuse to give me an exit visa."

"How come?"

Another pause, a little longer this time. Then he swallowed and said: "I was convicted by the People's Court." Another pause.

You should know—the architect stopped to tell us—that the People's Court only convicts people who are unquestionably Nazis. No wonder I was shocked. It didn't occur to me at first that it was stupid of Huber to pick me of all people to come to about this matter—and impudent, abysmally impudent of him. So I didn't think of throwing him out.

Huber saw me wince, and as he wasn't exactly what you would call a sensitive plant, this encouraged him. In a patronizing tone of voice, in fact with a kind of good humor, he went on: "Don't worry, I won't bite you, *Herr Doktor*." And then, quite casually: "Well, I just happened to be a member of the SA."—Listen to that *well*. And to take the sting out of it: *just happened!* And then, almost jolly: "And so one day we cleaned out a Jewish house."

Now you have to remember—L. continued—that the man had been working for me for two years. A clever type, very useful, skillful draftsman, a big hulk of a man, bony, with the face of a theological student from the country. He dragged his left foot a little. Even that had given me confidence in him, I don't know exactly why. All in all, I found him a sympathetic character; every once in a while we joked with each other. And now all of a sudden he was one of *them*. And had been all along.

He stood there, realizing that what I needed was a word of reassurance. "Look,

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GUENTHER ANDERS went to Vienna shortly after the war and has been living there since. This story, sent us from there, reflects some of the difficulties that Jews meet when they try to re-sink their roots in Central Europe. And it also reveals that Hitler's passage has left his surviving victims with a moral dilemma that can be as excruciating at moments as the burden of guilt that must weigh on their victimizers. Mr. Anders was born in Breslau in 1902, studied in the universities at Hamburg, Munich, Berlin, and Freiburg (where he worked under Husserl), and came to the United States in 1936, where he taught philosophy at the New School for Social Research until his return to Europe. This is his second appearance in COMMENTARY, which in December 1949 printed an essay of his on Kafka that was later expanded into a book, *Kafka—pro und contra*, recently published in Germany. The translation of this piece from the German is by Francis Golffing.

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Herr Doktor," he said encouragingly, "everything we did was under orders. So you see. . . ." He waited.

He waited for quite a while. But when he realized that I wasn't going to speak, he simply acted as though I had said, "Oh, I see," or "Of course!"

"And because I'm an unlucky fellow," he concluded, "I happened to be the only one they identified. By this." He pointed to a scar on his forehead. Then, giving the whole thing an innocuous air, he reached for a chair, said "May I?" and sat down.

I pulled myself together at last—at least enough to be able to think. Throw him out, I thought at once, or else talk. I decided to do the latter.

"And *I'm* the one to advise you?" I asked, quite matter-of-factly, I think. "I, of all people?"

"Yes, *Herr Doktor,* if you would be so kind." Indeed, he said *kind,* and the word came out intact.

"I assume," I continued, "that you know I am a Jew."

"Yes, I know." Then he shook his head as though he meant to say: It makes no difference to me. He went on: "I've been told, *Herr Doktor,* that you've been around and seen quite a few things. So I thought. . . ."

"Been around," I repeated.

"So it occurred to me that you would know . . . how to handle this sort of thing. I've taken the liberty of—"

"Certainly," I interrupted him. "I know quite a lot about this sort of thing."

"That's what I thought."

"On account of *you,*" I added.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I said on account of you. Who sent whom traveling?"

I doubt that Huber got the point right away. He frowned.

"You understand me perfectly," I said. "I don't have to explain further."

He pointed to himself incredulously.

"And now you expect me to teach you overnight what it took me ten hard years to learn?"

As I spoke he slowly began shaking his head. "So you honestly think it was me?"

"Who else?"

"Me—the one who kicked you out then?"

I found this a little blunt. I made no reply. We sat facing each other silently for about a minute. You may think that my silence was meant to put him in his place. Or that I hoped to be able to get rid of him this way, after all. I really don't know. I think I simply felt unequal to the situation. I couldn't think of anything to say. As for Huber, it was quite apparent that something was happening to him. His face suddenly looked helpless—altogether incongruous with that great hulking frame. He shook his head again, not because he wished to object, but because he couldn't believe—*what* I couldn't tell. Several times he made as if to speak, and his face as he did so had a pleading, desperate look.

"But, *Herr Doktor,*" he finally burst out, wiping his forehead with the back of his huge hand, "after all, I was only seventeen!"

L looked up at us. "Seventeen," he repeated, as if to impress it on us. Evidently he was still unable to take the word in calmly. For he now got up, walked the stiffness out of his legs, and then stood leaning against the back of his chair.

Now, L. went on, until Huber said "seventeen" I hadn't had any human feeling for him at all. It's true, I hadn't thrown him out, but simply because the shock had thrown me off. Not that the word "seventeen" had soothed me. Quite the opposite: it gave me a further shock. Seventeen—that I hadn't thought of before. But the horror I had felt at sitting face to face with a Storm Trooper somehow disappeared. I looked at him; I should have liked to recognize the boy of seventeen in him. I don't know why, but I probably expected to grasp his innocence better that way. Of course I could see no trace of the seventeen-year-old boy. On the contrary, I thought: How old he looks! Going on forty at least. But this was impossible. I began figuring.

"Why do you look at me like that?" he asked.

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"Seventeen, you say? So you're thirty now?"

"Twenty-nine."

"You mean, a lot has happened in the interval?"

He nodded.

I was eyeing his foot. "Stalingrad, or something?"

"Tobruk."

"It's all the same. Another consequence."

"Of what?"

"Of the time when you were seventeen."

"That too was a consequence."

"And you're still the same?"

"The boy of seventeen?"

He shrugged his shoulders. I nodded.

"So you're not sure?"

"But you see, don't you, that it doesn't depend on me? The label is still pinned on me, isn't it? In fact, here you are pinning it on again."

Perhaps there was something in what he said.

"And here you are believing that a wreck of twenty-nine ought to go on paying for the mistakes he made at seventeen—mistakes made under orders—aren't you?"

All of a sudden he pretended to be two people. But perhaps there really were two, a Huber of seventeen, and the one of today. I made no answer.

"Is that what you really think?"

"To say no would be too simple," I answered cautiously. "Too many people had to pay for your mistakes—if pay is the right word for it. The innocent ones, I mean—my sisters, for instance. You're responsible for their fate. But now you people expect to be treated as though nothing had happened, because the wrong is irreparable anyhow."

He looked at me questioningly.

"Auschwitz, for instance," I said.

"I see."

"And here you are claiming that old accounts should be forgotten. And expecting absolution and forgiveness. . . . No, it isn't even absolution you are after—apparently you don't need that—but advice, Huber!"

Yes, I suddenly called him by his name. How this happened, I can't explain. I remember feeling surprised at the moment. All the more since I had always before called him *Herr* Huber. Blaming people brings you closer together. There's nothing to be done about that. It's just the way things happen. My mistake was not to have shown him the door long before. Subjects like that are just too delicate. I should never have mentioned Auschwitz in his presence, at least not the way I did. And as a matter of fact, the moment that I spoke his name I was absolutely sure he would take advantage of our new intimacy. But whether he simply lacked presence of mind, or whether there was really a vestige of decency left in him, he didn't become familiar.

"*Herr Doktor*," he said instead, in a tone that gave me no cause for suspicion, "I'll be perfectly frank with you. There was nothing left of the boy of seventeen by the time the People's Court got to work. I wasn't kept in jail for very long, and even by that time *he* was no longer alive. What I mean is that the connection between what happened *then* and my 'punishment' was not always very clear in my mind. After all, I had seen much worse things. During the war, I mean. Things that were never punished. All right. Water under the bridge. And later on, when I was set free, the boy of seventeen seemed dead and buried forever." He pointed to his chest. "In any case, in here he no longer exists, if you see what I mean."

I nodded.

"Until the business of the visa came up. Until I had to run from Pontius to Pilate on the Australian business. Then the boy of seventeen came to life again."

I failed to understand.

"You'll understand in a minute. When I got up to the highest office, they suddenly dug the boy of seventeen up."

"I still don't understand what you mean."

"Well, you see, *Herr Doktor*, they sent me from pillar to post to get my exit visa, and who do you think I finally landed up with?"

I hadn't the faintest idea.

"One of *those* men. The ones I had truck with back in '38." And when I still

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looked blank: "One of my former leaders, a high officer in the SA." He put on a look of contempt. I said nothing.

"Well, I can't say you people were so smart when you put that fellow behind a desk," he continued after a pause. By "you people" he meant all of us who had fought against Hitler and beaten him, and now have let the victory slip through our fingers. Every one of us was included in his sarcasm.

"I have nothing to do with placing people in official jobs," I remarked, as dryly as possible. "But why should you complain? I suppose it was a piece of luck that you ran into someone like that."

"That's the way I felt, too. But times have changed a little, after all."

"Really?"

"The man didn't belong to the old bunch any more. At least not as regards certain cases—mine, for instance. You see, I come into his office, and there I see a very calm and good-natured-looking gentleman sitting over his papers, side-whiskered like old Franz Joseph. But, as I come closer, the *Hofrat* looks familiar to me. And before I manage to place him, I get an uncomfortable jolt, and my arm almost goes up in the Hitler salute. This tells me where I knew him, and I finally recognize him. I suddenly feel as jittery as I used to in the old days. The fellow used to be quite a martinet. It wasn't until then that I was struck with the idea you just expressed: this is certainly a stroke of luck. And if it isn't an old comrade! and—this is the end of the runaround. So I stand there with a happy grin, but in a second or so the grin fades away for now the man looks up from his desk. He's gotten a little gray at the temples—a civil service edition of the man I used to know—but unchanged in every other respect. The same way of looking at you, no eyelashes and no expression, as though his eye were just a thing, not to see with, but to look through you. Then I have a feeling the man has recognized me. Perhaps he knew all along who I was, from the time my name was sent in. But he won't let on. He's determined not to give himself away. As for my stroke of luck, that's all over with. Most likely the same sort of thing had happened to him before. Cases like this may be part of his daily routine. Anyhow, he looks right through me, asks the usual questions —name, birth certificate, etc.—as though I were a complete stranger, evidently hoping that if he didn't seem to recognize me, I wouldn't recognize him, but would think I had made a mistake. A fine example of a *Volksgenosse!*"

HUBER stopped and waited, in the hope, it seemed, of hearing me say something indignant about disloyalty. But for me, a Jew, to have to listen to an ex-Nazi reviling another ex-Nazi was about all I could take; preposterous, any idea of making common cause with him. Besides, I couldn't feel any indignation whatever about the *Hofrat*'s lack of solidarity. I keep my emotions for worthier occasions.

So I refused to be sympathetic, and simply asked: "So you took the cue, and played his game?"

"I did at first. His questions came so quick, one after the other, that I couldn't get through to him. Exactly as in the old days. Only his choice of words was more refined now. 'Civil servant,' 'highest echelon.' After five minutes, just as I was saying to myself that now the discussion was going to begin, he pushed back his chair and said: 'People's Court—awfully sorry, but there's nothing I can do for you. Exit on the right. Next man, please!' "

"And that's how it ended?"

"Yes, that was the way it ended. Naturally, I would have liked to grab him by the throat. But you get older."

"So you didn't say a thing?"

"Yes, after the event. As I walked down the stairs, and later in the street. Then I didn't choose my words. Except that he wasn't there any more. *Herr Hofrat,* I shouted. Back in '38 you had a different title, a much snappier one. Do you know how old I was in those days? Seventeen. And you? Maybe forty or forty-five. Quite grown-up, in other words. Who inveigled whom into joining the SA? Answer me,

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please. Who told stories to whom? Who gave orders to whom? I to you or you to me? And who got me into that mess with the People's Court? You see what I mean. Now you've changed your tune: People's Court? —awfully sorry, but there's nothing I can do for you.—That was the way I shouted, really telling him off, but it was all in the street, and I finally noticed that people were staring at me, so I stopped, and said to myself: Finis. Connections, emigration, Australia. Then I came to see you."

He fell silent and wiped his forehead. Now what do you people make of all this? he finally asked. Of course it was foolish of him to think that I of all people would be able to help him. But imagine now if, tomorrow, somebody else comes to see me, another of those fellows who went through the same thing at seventeen, a Huber Number Two, but this time asking for the kind of help I *can* give. What would you do? Would you help? Ought you to help? Would not anything you did be ambiguous? And any refusal to act just as ambiguous?

Nobody in the group offered to answer.

I can't persuade myself that Huber was a cynic, L. went on. Simply an ordinary man, caught in the crush of history, who wasn't over-fastidious in his choice of means when it was a question of survival. Seeking advice from a Jew wasn't a sign of turpitude, but simply a lack of moral sensitivity. His outbursts, though they might look suspicious, were genuine, I think. Mediocrity does not protect you from despair, and it's no proof of dishonesty either. After all, Huber had every reason to feel desperate. And the question whether a man of thirty should be held accountable for what he committed at the age of seventeen—under duress, besides—remains a valid question, no matter what moral stuff the "victim" is made of.

Then suddenly L. cried: Do you want me to tell you? I'm fed up. Yes, fed up. It's more than anybody can put up with. Honestly, I think I'm going to get out of here again. Yes, emigrate once more. Far away from here to the opposite end of the world, to a place where such things can't happen—if necessary to Australia.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

MR. BIG MOVES TO GREENER PASTURES

Crisis in Reedville, N. J.

S. T. HECHT

WHEN the richest man, the big personality, the *primum mobile* of the community takes it into his head, unexpectedly it would seem, to move out of town, the repercussions are bound to be wide.

"Why is Barney moving?" one asks. "Did somebody insult him?"

This from an innocent in the community, who somehow has not managed to learn that a rich man is never insulted—he's generally on the giving end when insults fly.

"Isn't Barney happy here any more?" another inquires, and this stirs circles of speculation on the life of a rich man in a small town. After all, what's the use of being rich if you can't spread your wings?

In Reedville and East Reedville we have some well-to-do folk, and some of the middling kind. We have a few poor too, God bless 'em, to remind us of our humanity, but not another Barney Rossman, not even a triplicate pale carbon copy. With whom then can he be at ease? The oppressiveness of his own wealth bears down on his invited guests. He senses their embarrassment. As for the rich *goyim,* he has tried already. John Thomas, president, and Andrew Bigelow, vice-president of the local bank at which Barney does business, again and again invited him for a round of eighteen holes at their golf club. He talked to Riba, his wife, and the two of them found reason why Barney should go.

"You can't insult those people!" they agreed.

So Barney goes, and when Riba sees his car in the driveway home again, she rushes up to the door, all wings and flutter, while he pokes his bag away in the hall closet. "How was it, Barney?" she whispers. But really, she doesn't have to inquire. It's written all over Barney.

"You didn't have a good time?"

"*Mit goyim!*" he drops into the vernacular, glad to be home again. "I have one drink while they take two, and when I have two they have four. I used to think I was a drinker. Now I know."

His head is still spinning.

He had walked the golf course not so steady till at last they were back in the clubhouse. He looked around. Such faces! *Treyf vie chazer!*—Micks to the bone. And they all looked at him!

"Come on, Barney! Let's have another!"

"No thanks. My liver."

Riba is disappointed, while Barney, disappointed with himself, and upset, says, "Then they told jokes, and more jokes."

THIS is a second contribution from S. T. HECHT's studies of the not entirely tranquil Jewish *shtetl* located within Reedville, a town found somewhere between the Hackensack and the Hudson Rivers, and reflecting all the tensions of the half of American Israel that lies beyond the latter stream. Mr. Hecht's first sketch, "Seven Men in Search of a Rabbi," in our June issue, excited praise for its authenticity from many of our readers acquainted with small-town Jewish life. Mr. Hecht is a teacher of English and economics in a high school in Newark, New Jersey.

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So it wasn't a success with the rich *goyim;* but the town somehow got to know that Barney and the bank president played golf together.

But how long can you draw pride and pleasure from such an experience? He must find others in his own class, Jews like himself. Could that be why he's moving out? Thus the speculation and the gossip flow concurrently, and each person according to his kind comes up with an explanation why Barney is leaving us.

But for the community as a whole this is no mere matter of idle talk. The community has very good reasons to take a sober view; it doesn't find it so easy to turn the incredible into the acceptable; Barney, don't you see, is the *deus ex machina* for the whole works.

BARNEY has been our United Jewish Appeal chairman for time out of mind. In his large house, once every March, are gathered the upper and the near upper crust for the famous Initial Gifts meeting. Who else but Barney Rossman can afford to burden his tables with such quantities and varieties of food, with drinks so stiff that when the guest speaker, after a big introduction which you better damn well give him if you're going to impress the crowd—when this pearl of eloquence, this roving Demosthenes, assuring you that he won't repeat the horrible Arabian atrocities—it used to be Hitler's butchers in the terrible old days—at last pulls out all the stops, the donations, brother, roll in of themselves! And who, by the way, during the High Holidays miraculously changes water into wine—I mean red budget figures into black?

At the big UJA breakfast who but Barney has the gall and the guts to stand up and bellow at his *shul* compatriots not to be pikers all their lives.

"Come on, boys, loosen up!"

His own donation, which by word of mouth the whole town knows already, Barney himself, in his capacity as chairman, calls out now. No maiden blush bepaints his cheeks as the applause slaps the walls like rain on a tin roof. Then he himself goes down the list of the chief contributors and reads the sums he has managed to wangle from them privately—but now in public he can pillory and whip them into giving more. He's a high-pressure man, in business as well as in charity.

"You there, Charley! You should be ashamed to give only a miserable seven hundred bucks! Leave the ponies alone awhile and you'll more than make it up."

They smart under his tongue lashings and wish he wouldn't do it. But who can get angry at Barney? He isn't doing it for himself. He'd laugh all the harder if you showed you were touchy.

"Anybody that doubles what they promised me in private, I'll give him a week at Grossinger's."

The UJA is Barney's private baby, his toy, the real expression of himself as he enjoys seeing himself. It's the one Jewish thing he does with a whole heart. He supports the *shul* handsomely, but it yields him no personal pleasure. The *shul* is there: you gotta support it. But it doesn't mean a thing, really. Not like the UJA! The field man from New York lathers him with compliments. "Mr. Rossman, there isn't another like you. You certainly know how to do a wonderful job."

ALL of which is perfectly true. Early in February, even before the national goal is set, Barney says to Tessie Clayton, his private secretary, "Tessie, it's UJA time!" Miss Clayton is the real McCoy, a smart *shiksa* and just the thing for Barney who when there's need for secrecy likes to shift gears into *mamme loshen*—Yiddish. Tessie contacts by phone the special list of names Barney has drawn up and now hands to her.

"Tell 'em it's for Monday night, right here in the office, and anybody says they can't make it, *let me talk to 'em.*"

Not only is it an honor to be selected by Barney as one of his inner core of engineers for the UJA. He makes it worthwhile. In the company's private dining room they drink a few, then there's a catered supper. After sup-

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per, long cigars of pure Havana glow and tremble in the unaccustomed mouths; and come about midnight, the choicest of the chosen remain behind to get their pants trimmed off in a snorting game of poker while the others grope their way through Barney's huge factory clothed in darkness now, and out to the parking lot where perhaps a touch of snow has whitened the midnight world.

A few months later, gavel in hand, at his first public meeting in the *shul*, Barney pounds the table and orders Gittleson, our dried-up impoverished *shammes*, to sit down already.

"Stop walking around and talking!"

But our *shammes* replies, *"Nit mit dem hammer azoy fiel"*—stop banging so much with your hammer, and he continues to scold the smokers for throwing butts on the floor.

"Is ashtrays right there, so why you throwing on the floor? In your home you do like that too?"

Big Barney, with eyes and a voice used to issuing orders, stands impotent, defied by the *shammes* bravely doing his duty.

Everybody hollers, "Sit down already, Gittleson. You're spoiling the show!" But Abe Klein pretends to champion the underling.

"Atta boy, Gittleson," he cries. "Stand up for your rights. Ain't you a paid-up member just like the rest of us?" And poor Gittleson grins through his thin teeth and says to Abe, "That's right, Abe. You tell him, Abe. This ain't like in Russia with the Czar. Is a free country."

THE women of Reedville wring their hands, hearing that Riba Rossman, a Sisterhood ex-president, is going to leave them for good. But says Riba, "Don't worry, darlings. I'm still gonna be one of the girls. You can count me in on everything."

But everybody knows how it'll work out. For a year or so she'll keep up her memberships and her generous donations; but as she makes her way in the new town and joins all the organizations over there—you can't keep on paying double. They will be seeing her less and less.

Such a gorgeous home she's got! Plates with gold borders and painted pictures on every one and hanging mysteriously on the wall, each one different from the other, more than two dozen right in the foyer where you come in. And oil paintings. Sunsets! Windmills! Cows by a brook! Riba loves nature. And for Barney, in respect to his sporting blood, the interior decorator recommended a Spanish toreador with knee-length plush pants and a red cape bowing to a señorita with fringed shawl on her shoulders and a fan to her face with one arm akimbo on wicked hips. At night you push a button and the lights glare on the varnish, and the heavy gold frames look positively terrific. A vast living room, not with one sofa—with three! Wherever you turn stands a deep chair that takes you in like a feather bed. They gotta dig you out comes time to go home. Lampshades so huge you can't see your neighbor's face. From B. Altman's yet, Riba tells you, at a hundred and fifty a throw. An alabaster female, naked, is poised on one foot. Her hair is wild. Her breasts are firm. The piece of resistance, somebody calls it. She stands on the mantel over the fireplace with its artificial birch logs. Her arms meet over her head. Between two delicate fingers she holds a gold clock. Seeing it the first time everybody exclaims, "How beautiful!" and Riba glows. It's her own selection. The interior decorator didn't like it. A lot they know, these decorators. A Steinway grand, open to the teeth, stands in the big bay window, useless *nebech*—the pity of it—as Riba sighs to her friends, "My girls won't touch it. 'Oh what's the use, Ma. We'll never be concert players.' Maybe I should take lessons myself?" Riba adds disconsolately, smiling and trying to disguise her disappointment.

What wouldn't she have given as a girl to have a piano! Mama would have sold her right eye for one. But that's how it is with modern children. They don't appreciate what they have. Everything comes too easy for them, and sighing she recalls what a hard life was her father's and mother's and even her own.

When Riba is alone she steals over to the

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Steinway and with two fingers, like an untutored typist, she pecks out her favorite, *"A Yiddishe Mamme,"* and she hums to herself sadly. If she had the nerve she would take lessons. But it's too late . . . too late, she reminds herself, and she sings softly, sadly. Why is she sad, she asks herself, and she recalls that she's going to move. Move from these nice people, her Sisterhood friends. After all!

So all this opulence, this prime source of community welfare, of local Jewish pride, is to be snatched away from Reedville —as if the earth had opened up!

Barney Rossman, of course, didn't proclaim that he was planning to move out. The rich don't do it like that. Only the poor babble about their plans. The rich look around quietly, and when they've found what they're after they don't go asking for advice. For advice everybody comes to them. Of course they're smarter! Who makes the money, you or they? They don't even go to the bank for favors. They call up.

"I want!"

The bank cashier says, "Certainly, Barney. Is that all?"

A poor man they'll ask a hundred questions, take away his life insurance policy, make the wife also come down and sign, and if he's late by as little as one day with a payment, God forbid—*nu, nu! 'stutzach mit* notices! What a stir! But Barney they handle with kid gloves. If any papers of his fall due he gets a polite little reminder. Sometime, for just a month, I'd like to be rich and see what it feels like. I'd have nothing to worry about. Just open the checkbook and write.

But as mother, may she rest in peace, used to say, "It's *their* America!" Barney is Barney; admired, courted, respected, and when he announces that he'll move, you can build a house on it. He'll move, even if the community doesn't like it—feels betrayed in a sense.

In all fairness to Barney, you've got to allow that Teaneck and Englewood are fancier by far and more progressive than our poor little Reedville with its one-horse *shul.* And also, it's quite possible, as my wife whispered when I told her the news about Rossman, that Barney is worried about his daughters. One, in high school, comes home and complains that there's not a Jewish boy in school to ask her to the prom; and the other, in junior high, keeps chattering all the time about Johnny Wood and what a swell boy with blue eyes and flaxen hair.

"Mama, he wants to take me."

Before you know it there could be trouble!

But in Englewood or Teaneck there's a real live Jewish community that provides dances for their Jewish boys and girls. The grown-ups too are going places. They have a big Jewish Center and a Community Director. Famous speakers come out to address them, and sleep over in Jewish homes. In Teaneck and in Englewood you can find plenty of rich Jews, even richer than Barney. So why shouldn't he move away from Reedville?

I couldn't believe it at first.

"Waddye mean he'll move?" I said to Greenspan. "Who told you?"

"Is everybody knows, and you asking, 'Who told you.' "

Gently by the lapel of my coat Mr. Greenspan drew me towards the interior of his store. He had something that couldn't possibly be communicated on the sidewalks.

"Confidentially, Mr. Waxman, I wouldn't worry if I was you."

My face must have given me away.

In the few years I had been in Reedville I had seen that Barney was a dynamo. Occasionally he'd come to our Men's Club meetings and then everybody itched to sit next to him. Not that some of his gold rubbed on to you, but your stock went up. In '46, my first full year in Reedville, Barney had given eight thousand to the UJA. In '47 he raised it to ten thousand. Now, in the YEAR OF DESTINY, the '48 campaign, when young Israel was making world history—that's when Barney Rossman of all things had to decide to move out of town.

Who was going to run our UJA campaign?

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Some of us were already determined to make it our highest quota ever—fifty thousand dollars! And Rossman was moving!

"Mr. Waxman," Greenspan continued persuasively, "is not the worst thing as could happen. Myself personally, I don't believe in rich people. Is not I'm glad Mr. Rossman is moving out or I don't like him. *Chas v'chulile!* — Perish the thought! — But rich people, from what I seen, is always looking after themselves first—take it from Greenspan!" His eyes enfolded me. "Greenspan knows what he is saying."

On his chair I observed the Jewish *Forward*. Is it possible, I wondered, that Greenspan is a socialist, at heart an anti-capitalist?

"So you shouldn't misunderstand, Mr. Waxman, I wanna say that too rich is not good for a community. They drags the little people into a big expense and they make fency-shmentzy. Must be like this and must be like that and they make a burden for the people which has to work hard to meet the budget. So is all the time chasing around with affairs, and raffles and dances and journals, a big excitement all the time to make money, and meantime is nothing Jewish. Is like a big business, not religion. Is better small people, like you and me."

To be equated by Greenspan with Greenspan himself was indeed a compliment. There was something about him, in the persuasiveness of his speech, its sincerity in the idiosyncrasies of his idiom. At meetings, man after man would speak and say nothing. It took Greenspan to stir things to a head.

One time we debated whether to retain a young man who was teaching our Hebrew School, such as it is, four times a week. Complaints from the children that he smoked while he taught them, that he was late frequently, brought the parents to a protest meeting where they kept belaboring the teacher, until Greenspan rose.

"Is hard to understand from you people. Honest to God is very hard. Comes time to hire a teacher and you don't want to pay. You say is too much. So you hire this young man and now you are complaining. With teachers, mine friends and fellow Jews, is like with other things. You get what you pay for. For why you keep abusing this young man? First of all is absolutely un-American. He ain't here he should defend himself. Second of all. Has he got what you want and he ain't giving it to you? *He ain't got it!* So what's the use mit calling him names? Tell him he's through and that's all!"

Greenspan's little store specialized in women's things of the less expensive sort. He and his wife occupied the rear. I heard her stirring in the back, a radio tuned low.

During the war their son was shot down in combat and they had no news of him for months until one night a telephone call from a stranger, who merely gave his name as Tom Bailey, informed Greenspan that his son's name had just been read over the radio as having been found alive in Italy. Greenspan broke out into the streets.

"Is good people in the world!" he shouted. "Is good people everywhere!"

That whole night he carried on, calling up his friends and relatives.

"A stranger, nobody from which I never heard before, a *goy* yet into the bargain, calls up from hundreds of miles to tell me the good news and before I could even think to say thank you, he hangs up. If only I could find him. I would get down on my knees. I tell you people is crazy that says *goyim* is not our friends. Takes a time like this to find out. Is all one people and one God!"

Next day there was a large sign in his window:

MINE SON, THANK GOD,
IS FOUND ALIVE! COME AND
GET GOODS AT COST FOR
TWO DAYS ONLY
ANYTHING IN THE ENTIRE STORE!

He and his wife worked quietly together, without hired help, observing between them a division of labor that showed itself when women appeared in the store asking for a corset or a brassiere.

"Is not mine department," he would say modestly, and even jocularly, and as he called for his missus, he himself would disappear. It was she, by the way, who once

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tried to tell me that modern people nowadays no longer bought cemetery plots. The *shul* at the time was having a drive to dispose of its extra lots at reduced prices to members only. "Is now the style to be created," she assured me with all earnestness.

GREENSPAN continued.

"You will see, Mr. Waxman, comes the time for the UJA and we will have a UJA, Rossman or no Rossman. In the old country was a saying: When the *gvir*—rich man—moves out, falls the town on its face. Not in America. Mr. Rossman will give his money somewhere else, and we here in Reedville will give just the same. Only won't be with such fireworks."

Despite Greenspan's assurance that he harbored no ill feelings against Rossman, he failed to convince me. I had never seen him at any of our Initial Gifts meetings, where one came by personal invitation from Barney. Greenspan, like all the others who gave less than a hundred, came faithfully to the UJA breakfasts.

"Is some people gives ten dollars and means more to them than Rossman's ten thousand. I'm giving seventy-five and for me is a lot of money. I must give a hundred to be invited to Initial Gifts. For twenty-five more I can come. Is baby play, Mr. Waxman! I don't have to come. I seen already how the rich lives. But this year on account that business is better, I can afforder it and I'm going to double up from last year. But I don't need no Initial Gifts to make me. Is in a man's heart what he gives, or is worth nothing!"

This last sentiment came with such earnest conviction and such an outpouring of sentiment that I felt called on to explain why I, who certainly couldn't afford to give a hundred dollars, was nevertheless invited to the Initial Gifts meetings.

"I do the publicity."

Greenspan's eyes opened.

"So is you is putting all them words together so smart. And all the time I'm reading 'Mr. Rossman says this, Mr. Rossman says that' I'm thinking is Rossman doing it himself. That explains everything!"

He then offered me his congratulations.

"Is certainly a wonderful thing to be educated. Only last night I was saying to mine wife—"

He called out, "Mrs. Greenspan! Is Mr. Waxman here. Come and tell him what only last night I said about the UJA publicity."

Tall, matronly, with gray hair and a brace of gold in her smiling mouth, Mrs. Greenspan came out from her apartment to welcome me.

"So is you, Mr. Waxman, mine husband is talking to. No wonder he don't bother me the last fifteen minutes."

She confirmed her husband's admiration of my publicity while Greenspan listened quietly. Suddenly he turned to me.

"You know what I'm thinking, Mr. Waxman? Would be wonderful when Mr. Rossman moves, for you to be the UJA chairman."

"Not me," I said forcefully. "That's a rich man's job."

"Is again something wrong with the system. The rich is on top of everything!"

But he assured me that a well-educated young man like me, a father of two children, would have the people with him 100 per cent.

"But not their money," I hinted.

"Their money, too, Mr. Waxman," Mrs. Greenspan said. "Everybody laks you." I could see a hundred tongues licking me.

BARNEY ROSSMAN moved out in October, and it wasn't until well into the month of March, quite late for us, that we heard the first rumblings of a UJA drive, a cryptic message on a penny postcard calling a *Special UJA Meeting*.

It was a glum group that gathered in response to that call. The UJA field man had already canvassed the richer merchants, some of whom in the past had worked closely with Barney, but no one would accept the responsibility of the chairmanship.

At eleven-thirty that night, after much haggling and getting nowhere, the field man in desperation cried, "In Israel nobody is too busy!"

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He made an impassioned plea for somebody to take over on a *pro tem* basis, and it was then that Abe Klein came up with his idea to give Rossman a farewell dinner.

For ten years or more, Abe said, Barney had been the moving spirit of our UJA in Reedville. It was time to show our appreciation. We should give him a testimonial dinner, and perhaps a gold watch as a gift.

"And when we give it to him, leave us say, 'Barney, for the last time we want you should run our UJA this year.' "

His idea met with acclaim.

The Jewish War Veterans, knowing what war means, said they'd get the boys behind the drive.

"We'll organize like commandos and anybody who doesn't double his last year's donation, we'll have to know why."

But Greenspan rose to object. Not everybody, he maintained, could afford to double their gifts. And as for that testimonial dinner, he didn't see any need for it.

"A little something for a present is all right. But a gold watch is maybe a hundred and fifty dollars and Mr. Rossman needs a gold watch like I need a hole in the head."

"I'll give it for wholesale," Bob Stein, the jeweler, called out.

But Greenspan argued that even at wholesale it would still be expensive. Klein, however, had set a tide in motion. A resolution was made, seconded, voted on, and a committee was appointed.

We'll skip the details of the dinner except to record that it was a success. Barney in full dress, and Riba in low-cut sat at a raised table flanked by the committee. When the gold watch was presented Barney seemed stirred to the roots, and Abe Klein, master of ceremonies, hit it off when he said, "We'll miss you, Barney. We miss you already so bad I can't tell you. So now that you got the watch—"

We sat tense in our chairs. Would Barney be our Moses once more?

Barney said he would. A shout went up.

"Hurray!"

"Will you work with me?" he called back.

"Yes!" came the chorus, and somewhere in my head there clicked off the legendary Talmudic story of what happened at Mount Sinai. "*Maase v'nishmo!*" cried all of Israel at the foot of the mountain. "You command and we'll do!"

THE boys organized into teams and went hammer and tongs after every Jewish resident. I myself was part of a team with Harry Fogel, the commander of our local JWV, and we got a batch of cards and names, good and bad mixed together. We stumbled into one home to inquire about the house numbers, and the man answering, to my way of hearing, sounded like one of us, still in hiding.

"We're from the UJA," I blurted out, risking nothing, and I'll be hanged if we weren't invited in, and after some talk of this and that we walked out with a check for two hundred dollars.

"There's a prospect for the *shul*," Fogel said.

"Not in a million years," I replied. "What have we got to offer him?"

But it wasn't all skittles and beer. In some places we had to work.

There was one guy who runs a prosperous stationery store in town who began giving us a hard-luck story. But we had been forewarned about him.

"We ain't millionaires ourselves," Fogel threw at him.

"We got you down here for a hundred dollars." (We would have settled for fifty, but with this one we had been instructed to raise the ante.)

Fogel stood on one side of him. I stood on the other.

The prospect turned white. He groaned.

"You've got to give. . . . No. No. Not twenty dollars! What kind of a Jew are you anyway?"

Fogel said if he didn't give a respectable sum we'd let the entire community know.

The fellow quaked and his wife called out to her daughter, "Quick come in and rescue Papa!" and to us she cried, "What are you doing to my husband?"

These were the exceptions.

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Every night until the campaign was over we met in the *shul* and we set out like an army squad for detail. Some of the boys caught the fever of their military days, cried "Hip, hip," and we all laughed. It was from that night on that Abe Klein became "Colonel" Klein, since he was Rossman's deputy and started us out each night on our rounds. I still marvel at that man. You couldn't sell him a rabbi, a prayer, or a synagogue. He came, as he once said, "strictly for the ride." He needed friendship, and yet the thought that Israel was reborn lifted him out of himself, as if it had been his own personal renascence. "I don't understand why I'm excited about this," he confessed. "The rabbis will take over over there just like here." Yet he kicked in a thousand dollars, and when Rossman named him co-chairman, he gave an additional five hundred.

As I watched Klein at the table with his big head and his huge ears, taking UJA cards, taking cash, swapping stories with the boys, not a prepossessing personality as you looked at him but spirited in a strange animal way, rising suddenly, I thought, to a new emergency, I couldn't help but wonder if this, the excitement and the wonder of the doing, was the new Jewishness that I was looking for. It did seem like sound and fury, but I was not ready to say that it signified nothing. My own Jewishness, struggling to find a new foundation, was still uncertainly seated on childhood memories and practices.

(My mother had a blue box and it was filled regularly, with pennies, of course. How fiercely observant she used to be of the Sabbath and *kashrut*. The old wooden drain board by the sink flashed through my mind, the meat and the fowl on it that she used to salt three times over and wash with cold water. My father, too, was a strict observer. He would rise early in the morning and half through my sleep I could hear his prayers like the sound of a summer fly. "The Praying Alarm Clock," Mom used to call him. Friday night at table we sang between courses. The gaslight burned with a tiny blue flame all night long, and on Saturday morning Tony came and put it out.)

"That sonofabitch should have given at least fifty! Throw that lousy check back in his face. What kind of a Jew is he? Only ten dollars! He just bought a sixteen-family unit in Jersey City!" "Colonel" Klein shouted.

("Nu," my father used to say on Saturday afternoons. *"Fang'on*—Begin!" and together we went through the portion of the week—the *sedra,* then a section of Avoth — "The Ethics of Our Fathers"—and last of all, Gemorrah—*Babba Basra, Babba Metzia.* It still runs through me like an ancient rivulet, quietly through the wilderness that is me: *Hoyoh roichev al gaboy behaymoh vero' oh es hametzioh*—Riding on the back of an animal and spying something lying on the ground . . .)

"We made it!" I announced to my wife ecstatically.

"Made what?"

"The quota! The fifty thousand!"

"So what?"

"Waddye mean 'So what!' "

She had been waiting up for me. Our two youngsters were asleep.

"In another year Joey will be ready for Hebrew School. What's the use of all your working and running around? There isn't a decent school in town. I won't send him to that dump you got down there! I hear it's a disgrace. Why don't you raise some money for a new building?"

No matter what you do, somebody's always finding fault.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Haftorah for Yom Kippur

THE Book of Jonah is read in its entirety during the afternoon service on the day of Yom Kippur, as the Haftorah, the prophetic reading, appended to the reading of the Law. Jonah is one of the twelve minor prophets. But as against all the rest, his book does not purport to be the prophecy or writing of a prophet: it is rather a portrait of the prophet from the outside, so to speak, revealing a variety of unpleasant (and human) characteristics that would presumably have been concealed had we the words of Jonah himself: and it is this which gives the book its distinctive fascination.

Various reasons are given in Jewish writings for the selection of this prophetic reading on the Day of Atonement: "The Book of Jonah is read . . . in order to teach us that no man may fly away from God. . . . Another reason why we read the Book of Jonah is because it informs us that God pardons and forgives those who turn in Teshuvah [repentance], as we are told in the case of Nineveh. . . . Another reason for reading the Book of Jonah is because the prophecy of Jonah purposes to teach us that the compassions of God extend over all that he has made, even idolators—then how much more do they extend over Israel!" (*Days of Awe,* S. Y. Agnon).

A Jonah ben Amittai is mentioned in II Kings 14:25, as a prophet who was a contemporary of Jeroboam II, King of Israel in the 8th century B.C.E. There has been some inconclusive discussion among Biblical scholars as to whether this is the same Jonah, or a different one. In any case, from its style it is quite clear that the Book of Jonah was written centuries later.

JONAH has been a favorite subject for Midrashic commentary. We are told, for example, that the great fish that swallowed Jonah was specially created for this occasion when God created the world. The surprising reaction of Jonah to God's command is explained by the story that he had previously been given a similar commission to perform in Jerusalem, and that the inhabitants had repented and "averted the evil decree." Foreseeing a similar reaction in Nineveh, and fearful that his own reputation as a prophet would suffer thereby (or, more charitably, afraid that God himself would suffer in the eyes of the people), he decided to escape.

The version we print here is from the edition of the Holy Scriptures put out by the Jewish Publication Society of America.—ED.

NOW the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me." But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord; and he went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord hurled a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. And the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god; and they cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it unto them. But Jonah was gone down into the innermost parts of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him: "What meanest thou that thou sleepest? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not."

And they said every one to his fellow: "Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then said they unto him: "Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us:

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what is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?" And he said unto them: "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land." Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him: "What is this that thou hast done?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

Then said they unto him: "What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us?" for the sea grew more and more tempestuous. And he said unto them: "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not; for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, we beseech Thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for Thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased Thee." So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly; and they offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

I

AND the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. And he said:

I called out of mine affliction
Unto the Lord, and He answered me;
Out of the belly of the netherworld cried I,
And Thou heardest my voice.
For Thou didst cast me into the depth,
In the heart of the seas,
And the flood was round about me;
All Thy waves and Thy billows
Passed over me.
And I said: "I am cast out
From before Thine eyes";
Yet I will look again
Toward Thy holy temple.
The waters compassed me about, even to the soul;
The deep was round about me;
The weeds were wrapped about my head.
I went down to the bottoms of the mountains;
The earth with her bars closed upon me for ever;
Yet hast Thou brought up my life from the pit,
O Lord my God.
When my soul fainted within me,
I remembered the Lord;
And my prayer came in unto Thee,
Into Thy holy temple.
They that regard lying vanities
Forsake their own mercy.
But I will sacrifice unto Thee
With the voice of thanksgiving;
That which I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation is of the Lord.

And the Lord spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

II

AND the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying: "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and make unto it the proclamation that I bid thee." So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he proclaimed, and said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

And the people of Nineveh believed God; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. And the tidings reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying: "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing; let them not feed, nor drink water; but let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast, and let them cry mightily unto God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knoweth whether God will not turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?"

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And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, which He said He would do unto them; and He did it not. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said: "I pray Thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in mine own country? Therefore I fled beforehand unto Tarshish; for I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and compassionate, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy, and repentest Thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." And the Lord said: "Art thou greatly angry?"

Then Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his evil. So Jonah was exceeding glad because of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd, that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and requested for himself that he might die, and said: "It is better for me to die than to live." And God said to Jonah: "Art thou greatly angry for the gourd?" And he said: "I am greatly angry, even unto death." And the Lord said: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?"

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ON THE HORIZON

AN UNKNOWN TREASURE OF WORLD LITERATURE

Who Will Make Sholom Aleichem Available?

IRVING HOWE

WE LIVE in a time when the literature most valued by serious people is likely to be intense, recalcitrant, and extreme; when the novel is periodically combed for images of catastrophe; and the possibilities of life seem available only through ultimates, prophecies, and last judgments. Formally we accord Dostoevsky and Tolstoy equal honor, but in our hearts we feel closer to Dostoevsky; his seems the true voice of crisis, and we know ourselves to be creatures of crisis. I myself join in this response, and I believe it to be inevitable to our age.

Yet it would be good if we could also celebrate another kind of literature: the kind that does *not* confront the harsh finalities of experience, or strip each act to its bare motive, or flood us with anguish over the irrevocability of death. In such writers as Turgeniev, Chekhov, Silone, Sherwood Anderson at his rare best, and Sholom Aleichem at his frequent best, there is a mature restraint from the extremes of vision, a readiness to value those milder virtues which can only cause impatience in many modern minds. These writers—let me call them the writers of sweetness—do not assume evil to be the last word about man, and they seem to add: even if it is the last word there are others to be declared before we reach it. They do not condescend before the ordinary, or scorn the domestic affections, or suppose friendliness to be mere bourgeois cant; and perhaps because of these very virtues, they seldom strike us among the greatest writers. But they are often among the most tolerable: one can live with Chekhov in a way that is difficult with Dostoevsky, and one can love Silone with a warmth impossible to feel for D. H. Lawrence.

Sweetness is a quality our age suspects; and "sweetness and light" now seems a phrase of faint ridicule, calling to mind a genteel academicism, a cultivated futility. But when Matthew Arnold used the phrase he was hardly seeking a warrant for complacence; he knew that the quality of sweetness need not preclude the most stringent moral and social realism.

THE little I know about Yiddish literature strengthens my confidence in these remarks. Here is a literature which explored poverty as few others have, which studied the misery of this life as intensely as the French have studied love—many a Yiddish writer could speak as an expert on the subject of hunger. But while I do not wish to suggest that Yiddish literature has been without its voices of desperation and violence, I find myself repeatedly moved by the tone of love—a tone that is the most certain register of moral poise—with which such masters as Peretz and Sholom Aleichem faced the grimmest facts about ghetto life. Blinking nothing, they could accept everything.

THE publication of *Wandering Star* (Crown, 314 pp., $3.00), fourth volume of Sholom Aleichem's works to appear in English translation, affords IRVING HOWE an opportunity to assess Sholom Aleichem's extraordinary art, and to ask why he has not been accorded the place in world literature that many think he deserves. Mr. Howe is the author of *Sherwood Anderson* (1951) and of a study of William Faulkner published this past July.

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Why should this be so? Not, I think, because of any special virtues in Jewish life or character; nor even because of the distinctive religious cast of the ghetto. When Mendele wrote his tribute to the compressibility of the Jewish stomach, and Sholom Aleichem had his Tevye declare, "I was, with God's help, a poor man," and Peretz fused the harshest naturalism with the most exquisite lyricism in the story of poor young lovers called *In Keler*—these writers were expressing an ethos that reflects a unique historical condition. The ghetto Jews could be as greedy as any other human beings, and as unscrupulous in their pursuit of *parnosseh* (livelihood); but they were cut off from the world at an all too visible point, the limits of their social movement were pathetically clear. And here may be one cause for that fascination with the Rothschilds which runs through Yiddish writing and humor: the great family was not only Jewish, not only rich, not only close to the ears of kings, it had established itself halfway between two worlds, facing the brilliant and tempting West even as it cast an occasional, uneasy glance back at the Jews.

Who, in the ghetto world, was not finally a *luftmensh*, a Menachem Mendel trading nothing for nothing and living off the profits? This precarious position made history itself seem a little ridiculous—a response almost impossible to those who are *in* history; it made the ironic shrug a symbolic national gesture; and it made the feeling of fraternity with the poor a foundation for Peretz's delicate studies in character and Sholom Aleichem's marvelous flights into surrealism. This feeling had nothing in common with the populist sentimentality we have come to suspect in Saroyan and Steinbeck; no one could have been more caustic than Mendele or Sholom Aleichem in the criticism of Jewish life. What it signified was that, in the end, the best Jewish writers knew to whom their sympathies were pledged, and never doubted their ties even to the most miserable little *shnorer*. They wrote from a firm sense of identification, an identification that was simultaneously inheritance and choice; and this was the source of their moral security. (Consider what Sholom Aleichem would have made of Scott Fitzgerald's lifelong struggle with the problem of money!)

None of this, to my mind, has anything to do with *shtetl*-nostalgia; nor is it uniquely Jewish; the sense of fraternity with the poor is as fine in Silone as in Sholom Aleichem. It was only that the Jews, with God's help, had more occasion than most peoples to look into the matter.

IN THE last six years we have had four translations of Sholom Aleichem, three collections of stories and now *Wandering Star*, a novel. *Wandering Star* (translated by Francis Butwin) is inferior to the others, but the inferior work of a master. For Sholom Aleichem is a master in quite the same sense, though not to the same degree, that George Eliot or Mark Twain or James Joyce is. To those who know their Yiddish literature, such a declaration will seem amusingly naive; but those who know the American literary scene will appreciate its necessity. Neither Sholom Aleichem nor any other Yiddish writer has really entered the consciousness of literary America: the quarterlies say nothing about them, the universities do not teach them, the serious graduate students have hardly heard of them. For this ignorance there are several reasons: the problem of translation, the depreciation that creeps into the occasional Jewish presentation of Sholom Aleichem as a kind of national minstrel, and the snobbish assumption by some literary people that no great literature is likely to have come from any place as out of the way or grubby as the ghetto.

In *Wandering Star* Sholom Aleichem is not consistently at his best. He lacked a firm grasp of the novel form (he never attended a Writers' Conference). To watch him work up a complicated plot and then laboriously resolve it, is both amusing and touching; that such a genius should feel obliged to fool with such triviality! But the quality of genius comes through, gleaming in the interstices of the plot. And perhaps his particular kind of genius didn't need to master the novel form. So closely was he attuned to his audience, he could afford to take more for granted than any other important modern writer; he did not feel a need to put everything into his work, as does the writer who no longer knows for whom, if anyone, he writes. Sholom Aleichem's stories are therefore packed with clues, implications, and sly gestures which his readers could immediately grasp and enlarge.

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Wandering Star is a picaresque novel describing the travels of some indigent Yiddish actors from a Bessarabian town through Bucharest, Vienna, London, and finally New York. Traditional picaresque often portrays the social ascent of an outsider who storms society by disregarding its formal morality. In Sholom Aleichem, picaresque is more restricted, being primarily a horizontal journey that seldom moves beyond Jewish limits; the outer precincts, with their threats and allurements, are superbly suggested but seldom presented—again because of the economy possible to a writer who works in a living tradition—except, I should add, for a riotous burlesque of a laconic Englishman who is being milked by Nissel Schwalb, one of many experts in *combinatzies* who wander through the novel.

Hero and heroine are romantic sticks, but every other character breathes; a few bleed. They are all marginal, shabby, rather mad, and sometimes a bit disreputable; these impresarios, actors, directors, hangers-on, and confidence men are not at the center of Jewish life and not nearly so close to Sholom Aleichem as are Tevye and Menachem Mendel. Sholom Aleichem is not taken in by these fellows, but he gives them their due and in the end loves them. They are *his*, these fakers and *shnorers*, these grabbers and dreamers; they belong to his world, bear his brand. One character seems to me a major creation and an example of that still, winding sadness which a careful reading will reveal in Sholom Aleichem. Rising from prop-boy to impresario, Holtsman coughs his way through the Yiddish theaters of Europe, a fabulous schemer and bluffer, yet dedicated to the theater as he sees it. His success lasts as long as the hero of the novel, a gifted young actor, stays with him; and when his protégé abandons him to go to America, Holtsman dies in Whitechapel, spitting up blood, cursing the present, hungering for the past. There are others, too, not so finely individualized but fascinating as types: Madame Cherniak, the character actress also known as Braindele Kosak, whose well-filled stocking tempts repeated advances and whose face leads to repeated jiltings; Nissel Schwalb, the master of moneyless finance; Shchupak, the director with three wives; Klammer, the restaurant owner who dreams of dramatic glory. Touched in lightly, often caricatured, all are authentic Jewish types.

THE word "tradition" has become an ikon of modern criticism, and "traditional," though properly a neutral term, serves for implicit praise. Yet if by traditional we mean not merely a writer's sense of continuity with the writers that have preceded him, but also his sense of being rooted in living culture and intimately related to an active audience, then it is above all in Yiddish literature, and certainly far more so than in modern English or American literature, that tradition is a sustaining force. Consider the immense advantages under which Sholom Aleichem worked: he could assume that his readers knew not only the world he described but every nuance of character he hinted at; he had no need for depth psychology or intensive analysis of character, for his readers lived next door, as it were, to Tevye and Menachem Mendel and Holtsman. He could, that is, count on one of the main resources of tradition: the powers of unconscious or implicit communication among members of a coherent group. In terms of language he could count, as well, on the tremendous possibilities for wit and ambiguity that followed from an interplay of Yiddish text and Hebrew quotation; on the possibilities from a salting of the text with the rich Yiddish proverbs and epigrams; and on the further dimension of meaning that could follow from a slight twisting of Biblical quotation or Yiddish proverb.*

The Wasteland is a more recondite work than a group of Sholom Aleichem stories, but the footnotes Eliot felt obliged to append to it indicate that he was writing in a society where tradition had been disrupted, while the coherence and conciseness of Sholom Aleichem's stories indicate how much he could still expect from his readers—and from his readers throughout the world. He had no need to foreshorten plots or seek fresh devices by which to avoid boring his audience; he was as sure of his readers as of his materials; and which Western writer since Tolstoy has been able to enjoy such advantages?

Perhaps the greatest advantage of all was that he wrote at a time when the Jewish

*See Maurice Samuel's article "Who Can Translate Yiddish?" in COMMENTARY, June 1948.

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tradition still pulsed vigorously, but Yiddish literature itself had not yet become excessively "literary." Peretz is a literary man in a sense Sholom Aleichem, and Mendele before him, can hardly be said to be; which may account for the shade of preference one has for the latter two. In Sholom Aleichem the sense of the past is still strong, but the language comes far less from a literary stock than first-hand, from the *yarid* (fair), and the *gass* (street), still fresh, rich, frothing with idiom. The forces of dissolution have begun to appear, and they may account for the occasional note of doubt one hears in Sholom Aleichem. But he need not linger on this, he need only sketch it in: one of the finest moments in *Wandering Star* occurs when a group of young Hasidim visit the "modern" theater and are enchanted by what they see.

In translation, something of this tradition-rooted strength must be lost. I suppose, for example, that modern readers may be taken aback by the violence and coarseness of the cursing in which the actors of *Wandering Star* indulge. Jewish life certainly had its share of coarseness, but whoever is familiar with the role of invective and hyperbole in Yiddish speech will make the necessary ironic discounts. Actually coarseness is second only to cruelty among the traits Sholom Aleichem dislikes. Though he never romanticizes the poor, he does write with a certain harshness about the rich, at least with as much harshness as he can summon. The two least attractive characters in *Wandering Star* are a rich village Jew who visibly corrupts the language, and the "Maecenas of Lemberg," an even richer Jew who pretends to a passion for art but closes his pocketbook to artists. Both of these men, the one openly and the other subtly, are *grobe yungen*—and it is the *grober yung*, the man lacking in delicate sensibilities, whom Sholom Aleichem can least abide. His heroes are, above all, *edel:* Tevye the dairyman is a man of exquisite refinement in all the things of life that really matter.

IF MODERN literary men cared about tradition as much as they claim, Sholom Aleichem would be avidly discussed in the literary journals and as many dissertations would be written about him as are about Faulkner. And if the chatter one hears about values were very much more than educated noises, Sholom Aleichem would be read with amazement and joy: for in how many other modern writers does one find so lovely a a quality of feeling, so warming and fraternal a vision, so active a sense of human goodness? Middleton Murry once said of Thomas Hardy that "the contagion of the world's slow stain has not touched him." This magnificent remark must have referred to something far more complex and valuable than innocence, for no one could take Hardy to be merely innocent; it must have referred to the power to see the world as it is, to love and yet not succumb to it; this is the power that I find, admire, in Sholom Aleichem.

But if we are to deplore the neglect of Yiddish literature in American literary circles, what are we to say about its neglect in the Jewish world? and particularly in those official segments of the Jewish world aggressively devoted to the slogan of "Jewish survival"?

There are now in print four volumes of translation of Sholom Aleichem, one of Mendele, perhaps two of Peretz. Surely, this is a wretchedly inadequate representation of the major Yiddish figures—not to mention the many other secondary writers who have not been translated at all. We have a Portable Irish Reader but no Yiddish Reader, a collection of German stories in the Modern Library but not one of Yiddish stories. The Jewish organizations are ready to devote their resources to a variety of ends, but which of them would consider, for example, subventing an edition of Mendele, a writer whom an authority in COMMENTARY declares to have painted the Jewish world with a Balzacian completeness. Nor is there much time left; either the Yiddish literary heritage will soon be made available in translation or it will not, in any significant sense, be available at all.

For there are values, shades of perception, turns of feeling, blends of humor that can be found in Yiddish literature and nowhere else. In Sholom Aleichem we hear a voice of purity and sweetness; but even more important, we see the tremendous resources that come to a writer when he can work with the knowledge that wherever his readers may be, there he is loved.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

SOCIOLOGY LEARNS THE LANGUAGE OF MATHEMATICS

Some Recent Studies Analyzed

ABRAHAM KAPLAN

A TROUBLING question for those of us committed to the widest application of intelligence in the study and solution of the problems of men is whether a general understanding of the social sciences will be possible much longer. Many significant areas of these disciplines have already been removed by the advances of the past two decades beyond the reach of anyone who does not know mathematics; and the man of letters is increasingly finding, to his dismay, that the study of mankind proper is passing from his hands to those of technicians and specialists. The aesthetic effect is admittedly bad: we have given up the belletristic "essay on man" for the barbarisms of a technical vocabulary, or at best the forbidding elegance of mathematical syntax. What have we gained in exchange?

To answer this question we must be able to get at the content of the new science. But when it is conveyed in mathematical formulas, most of us are in the position of the medieval layman confronted by clerical Latin—with this difference: mathematical language cannot be forced to give way to a vernacular. Mathematics, if it has a function at all in the sciences, has an indispensable one; and now that so much of man's relation to man has come to be treated in mathematical terms, it is impossible to ignore or escape the new language any longer. There is no completely satisfactory way out of this dilemma. All this article can do is to grasp either horn, sometimes oversimplifying, sometimes taking the reader out of his depth; but hoping in the end to suggest to him the significance of the growing use of mathematical language in social science.

To complicate matters even further, the language has several dialects. "Mathematics" is a plural noun in substance as well as form. Geometry, algebra, statistics, and topology use distinct concepts and methods, and are applicable to characteristically different sorts of problems. The role of mathematics in the new social science cannot be discussed in a general way: as we shall see, everything depends on the kind of mathematics being used.

I

THE earliest and historically most influential of the mathematical sciences is geometry. Euclid's systematization of the results of Babylonian astronomy and Egyptian surveying set up a model for scientific theory that remained effective for two thousand years. Plato found in Euclid's geometry the guide to the logical analysis of all knowledge, and it was the Renaissance's "rediscovery" of Plato's insistence on the fundamentally geometric structure of reality that insured the triumph of the modern world view inaugurated by Copernicus. Scientists like Kepler accepted the Copernican hypothesis because it made the cosmos more mathematically elegant than Ptolemy's cumbersome epicycles had been able to do.

IT IS an open question just how much longer the literate layman will be able to understand what social scientists are trying to say; some of the most important recent books in the field present an almost impenetrable barrier of mathematical symbols. In this article ABRAHAM KAPLAN describes, in straightforward English, what is happening on the other side of the barrier. Mr. Kaplan is associate professor of philosophy at the University of California in Los Angeles. He is the co-author, with Harold D. Lasswell, of *Power and Society* (1950).

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The study of man—to say nothing of God!—enthusiastically availed itself of mathematical method: witness Spinoza's *Ethics*, which claimed that it "demonstrated according to the geometrical manner." But Spinoza's *Ethics* failed, as demonstrative science, because the 17th century did not clearly understand the geometry it was applying with such enthusiasm. The discovery of non-Euclidean geometries two hundred years later revealed that the so-called axioms of geometry are not *necessary* truths, as Spinoza and his fellow rationalists had always supposed, but merely postulates: propositions put forward for the sake of subsequent inquiry. It is only by deducing their consequences and comparing these with the perceived facts that we can decide whether or not the postulates are true. Geometry is a fully developed example of a set of undefined terms, prescribed operations, and the resulting postulates and theorems which make up a *postulational system*; it is in this form that it is influential in some of the recent developments in the social sciences.

PERHAPS the most elaborate postulational system for dealing with the data of social and psychological science was constructed in 1940 by Clark Hull and associates of the Yale Institute of Human Relations (C. L. Hull et al., *Mathematico-Deductive Theory of Rote Learning*, Yale University Press, 1940). "Rote learning" is a very specialized branch of psychology that studies the learning of series of nonsense syllables; presumably, this tells us something about the act of learning in its "purest" form, with no admixture of influence from the thing learned.

The problems of the field revolve around ways of explaining the patterns of learning that are in fact discovered; why the first syllables in any series are learned first, the last soon after, and why the syllables a little past the middle of the given series take longest to memorize, and so on. There is a vast number of observations of this sort to be made, and Hull's ideal was to set up a postulational system which would allow observed patterns of learning to be logically deduced from relatively few postulates.

The system consists of 16 undefined terms, 86 definitions, and 18 postulates. From these, 54 theorems are deduced. The deductions can, in principle, be checked against the results of direct observation, in experimental situations or elsewhere. In many cases, as the book points out, existing evidence is as yet inadequate to determine whether the theorems hold true; in the great majority of cases, experimental evidence is in agreement with logically deduced theorems; in others, there is undoubted disagreement between deduced expectation and observed fact. Such disagreements point to basic defects in the postulate system, which, however, can be progressively improved.

The authors consider their book to be principally important as an example of the proper scientific method to be used in the study of behavior. And certainly, as a formal demonstration of the handling of definitions, postulates, and theorems, the book is unexceptionable. However, science prides itself on its proper method because of the fruitfulness of its results; and it is to the fruitfulness of this effort that we must address ourselves.

One example of the method may suggest better than general criticism the problem raised. Hull proves in one of his theorems that the greater the "inhibitory potential" at a given point in the learning of a rote series, the greater will be the time elapsing betwen the stimulus (the presentation of one nonsense syllable in the list) and the reaction (the pronouncing of the next memorized nonsense syllable). "Inhibitory potential" is one of the undefined terms of the system; it denotes the inability of the subject, before his involvement in the learning process, to pronounce the appropriate syllable on the presentation of the appropriate stimulus. (It may be pictured as a force that wanes as the stimuli are repeated and the syllable to be uttered is learned.)

Now this theorem certainly follows logically from three postulates of the system (they involve too many special terms to be enlightening if quoted). However, on examining these postulates, the theorem is seen to be so directly implied by them that one wonders what additional knowledge has been added by formally deducing it. A certain amount must have been known about rote learning to justify the selection of those postulates in the first place. To deduce this theorem from them has added very little—if anything—to what was already known. In short: the geometric method used by Hull, correct as it is formally, does not, for this reader, extend significantly what we already knew about rote learning from his and others' work.

In the course of Hull's book "qualitative postulates," by which is meant the "unquanti-

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fied" ideas of thinkers like Freud and Darwin, are condemned because they have "so little deductive fertility"—because so few theorems may be deduced from them. In the narrowest logical sense of the phrase, this may be true. But fertility in the sense of yielding precisely determinable logical consequences is one thing; in the sense of yielding further insights into the subject matter—whether or not these can be presented as strict consequences of a system of postulates—it is quite another. The ideas of Darwin and Freud can hardly be condemned as lacking in fertility, even though they leave much to be desired from the standpoint of logical systematization.

This is not to deny that the postulational method can play a valuable role in science. But it is a question of the scientific context in which the method is applied. Newton and Euclid both had available to them a considerable body of fairly well-established knowledge which they could systematize, and in the process derive other results not apparent in the disconnected materials. Hull recognizes this condition, but supposes it to be already fulfilled in the area of learning theory. The results of the particular system he has constructed raise serious doubts that his supposition is true.

Science, basically, does not proceed by the trial-and-error method to which Hull, as a student of animal learning, is so much attached. It employs insight, itself subject to logical analysis, but too subtle to be caught in the coarse net of any present-day system of postulates. The geometric method in the new social science can be expected to increase in value as knowledge derived from other methods grows. But for the present, it is an elegantly written check drawn against insufficient funds.

II

IF THE 17th century was the age of geometry, the 18th was that of algebra. The essential idea of algebra is to provide a symbolism in which relations between quantities can be expressed *without a specification of the magnitudes of the quantities.* An equation simply formulates the equality between two quantities in a way that shows how the magnitude of one depends on the magnitude of certain constituents of the other.

The characterization of mathematics as a language is nowhere more appropriate than in algebra; the notation is everything. The power of algebra consists in that it allows the symbolism to think for us. Thought enters into the formulation of the equations and the establishing of the rules of manipulation by which they are to be solved, but the rest is mechanical—so much so that more and more the manipulation is being done, literally, by machines. The postulational method characteristic of classical geometry no longer plays as important a part here. Derivation is replaced by calculation; we proceed, not from postulates of uncertain truth, but from arithmetical propositions whose truth is a matter of logic following necessarily from the definitions of the symbols occurring in them. The equations that express relations between real quantities are, of course, empirical hypotheses; but *if* the equations correctly formulate the function relating two quantities, then certain numerical values for one necessarily imply certain numerical values for the other. Again, as in geometry, the facts are the final test.

In this spirit, the mathematicians of the 18th century replaced Newton's geometrizing by the methods of algebra, and the culmination was Laplace's system of celestial mechanics. Laplace's famous superman, given the position and momentum of every particle in the universe, could compute, it was thought, the entire course of world history, past and future. The development of quantum mechanics made this program unrealizable even in principle, just as the non-Euclidean geometries were fatal to the aspirations of the 17th-century rationalists. Nevertheless, this scientific ideal, so nearly realized in physics, has exerted enormous influence on the study of man, and much of the new social science is motivated by the attempt to take advantage of the powerful resources of algebra.

AMONG the most ambitious, but also most misguided, of such attempts is a 900-page treatise by the sociologist Stuart C. Dodd, *Dimensions of Society* (Macmillan, 1942). The author's ambition, declared in the subtitle, is to provide "a quantitative systematics for the social sciences." What is misguided is the failure to realize that a system is not provided by a symbolism alone: it is necessary also to have something to say in the symbolism that is rich enough to give point to the symbolic manipulation. Dodd presents a dozen symbols of what he regards as basic sociological concepts, together

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with four others for arithmetical operations. They stand for such ideas as space, time, population, and characteristics (the abstract idea "characteristics," and not the specific characteristics to be employed in sociological theory). In addition to these sixteen basic symbols, there are sixteen auxiliary symbols, compounds or special cases of the basic symbols, or supplements to them—for instance, the question mark, described as one of four "new operators," used to denote a hypothesis, or a questioned assertion. With this notation, every situation studied by sociologists is to be defined by an expression of the form:

$$S = {}^{s}_{s}(T; I; L; P)^{s}_{s}$$

The capital "S" stands for the *situation*, and the letters within the parentheses for *time*, indicators of the *characteristics* specified, *length* or *spatial regions*, and *populations*, *persons*, or *groups*. The semicolon stands for an unstated form of mathematical combination, and the small "s" for various ways of particularizing the four major kinds of characterizations. Thus "T^0" stands for a *date*, "T^1" for a *rate of change*, both of these being different sorts of time specifications. Instructions for the use of the notation require one hundred distinct rules for their formulation.

But this whole notational apparatus is, as Dodd recognizes, "a systematic way of expressing societal data, and not, directly, a system of the functionings of societal phenomena." "Facts," however, are data only *for* hypotheses; without the latter, they are of no scientific significance. Certainly a notational system can hardly be called a "theory," as Dodd constantly designates it, unless it contains some statements *about* the facts. But *Dimensions of Society* contains only one social generalization: "This theory . . . generalizes societal phenomena in the statement: 'People, Environments, and Their Characteristics May Change.' This obvious generalization becomes even more obvious if the time period in which the change is observed is prolonged." The last sentence may save Dodd, but not his "theory," from hopeless naivety.

Dodd's hope that his system of "quantic classification" will "come to play a role for the social sciences comparable to the classification of the chemical atoms in Mendelyeev's periodic table" is groundless. The periodic table, after all, told us something about the elements; more, it suggested that new elements that we knew nothing of existed, and told us what their characteristics would be when discovered. The fundamental point is that we have, in the case of Dodd, only a *notation*; when he speaks of the "verification" of his "theory," he means only that it is possible to formulate societal data with his notation.

Dodd's basic error is his failure to realize that after "Let x equal such-and-such," the important statement is still to come. The question is how to put *that* statement into mathematical form.

AN ANSWER to this question is provided in two books of a very different sort from Dodd's, both by the biophysicist N. Rashevsky: *Mathematical Theory of Human Relations* (The Principia Press, 1947) and *Mathematical Biology of Social Behavior* (University of Chicago Press, 1951). In these two books the author does not merely talk *about* mathematics; he actually *uses* it. In the earlier one, the methods of mathematical biology are applied to certain social phenomena on the basis of formal postulates—more simply, assumptions—about these phenomena. In the later book, these assumptions are interpreted in terms of neurobiophysical theory, and are derived as first approximations from that theory. The results, according to Rashevsky, are "numerous suggestions as to how biological measurements, made on large groups of individuals, may lead to the prediction of some social phenomena."

As a natural scientist, Rashevsky is not seduced, like so many aspirants to a social science, by the blandishments of physics. Scientific method is the same everywhere: it is the method of logical inference from data provided and tested by experience. But the specific techniques of science are different everywhere, not only as between science and science but even as between problem and problem in the same field. The confusion of method and technique, and the resultant identification of scientific method with the techniques of physics (and primarily 19th-century physics at that) has hindered the advance of the social sciences not a little. For the problems of sociology *are* different from those of physics. There are no concepts in social phenomena comparable in simplicity and fruitfulness to the space, time, and mass of classical mechanics; experiments are difficult to perform, and even harder to con-

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trol; measurement in sociological situations presents special problems from which physics is relatively free. Yet none of these differences, as Rashevsky points out, prevents a scientific study of man. That social phenomena are complex means only that techniques must be developed of corresponding complexity: today's schoolboy can solve mathematical problems beyond the reach of Euclid or Archimedes. Difficulties in the way of experimentation have not prevented astronomy from attaining full maturity as a science. And the allegedly "qualitative" character of social facts is, after all, only an allegation; such facts have their quantitative aspects too. And what is perhaps more to the point, mathematics can also deal with qualitative characteristics, as we shall see.

RASHEVSKY addresses himself to specific social subject matters: the formation of closed social classes, the interaction of military and economic factors in international relations, "individualistic" and "collectivistic" tendencies, patterns of social influence, and many others. But though the problems are concrete and complex, he deals with them in a deliberately abstract and oversimplified way. The problems are real enough, but their formulation is idealized, and the equations solved on the basis of quite imaginary cases. Both books constantly repeat that the treatment is intended to "illustrate" how mathematics is applicable "in principle" to social science: for actual solutions, the theory is admitted to be for the most part too crude and the data too scarce.

What this means is that Rashevsky's results cannot be interpreted as actual accounts of social phenomena. They are, rather, ingenious elaborations of what *would* be the case if certain unrealistic assumptions were granted. Yet this is not in itself objectionable. As he points out in his own defense, physics made great strides by considering molecules as rigid spheres, in complete neglect of the complexity of their electronic and nuclear internal structures. But the critical question is whether Rashevsky's simplifications are, as he claims, "a temporary expedient." An idealization is useful only if an assumption that is approximately true yields a solution that is approximately correct; or at any rate, if we can point out the ways in which the solution must be modified to compensate for the errors in the assumptions.

It is in this respect that Rashevsky's work is most questionable. Whatever the merits of his idealizations from the standpoint of "illustrating," as he says, the potentialities of mathematics, from the standpoint of the study of man they are so idealized as almost to lack all purchase on reality.

Rashevsky's treatment of individual freedom, for example, considers it in two aspects: economic freedom and freedom of choice. The former is defined mathematically as the fraction obtained when the amount of work a man must actually do is subtracted from the maximum amount of work of which he is capable, and this sum is divided by the original maximum. A person's economic freedom is 0 when he is engaged in hard labor to the point of daily exhaustion; it is 1 when he does not need to work at all. This definition equates increase in economic freedom with shortening of the hours of work; and an unemployed worker, provided he is kept alive on a dole, enjoys complete economic freedom. Such critical elements of economic freedom as real wages, choice of job, and differences in level of aspiration are all ignored.

Freedom of choice, the other aspect of individual freedom, is analyzed as the proportion borne by the amount of time an individual is not in contact with others who might interfere with his choices, to the time he spends alone plus time that is spent in the company of others with the same preferences. This makes freedom of choice decrease with increasing population, so that by this definition one is freer in a small village than a large city. Nothing is said about prying neighbors, or the presence or absence of a secret police, a most important determinant of "freedom of choice." The whole matter of the "introjection" of other persons' standards, as discussed for instance in Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*, is ignored, as are such fundamental considerations as knowledge of the choices available, or the opportunity to cultivate skills and tastes.

On current social issues Rashevsky betrays that he suffers from the same confusions and rationalizations as afflict students without the advantages of a mathematical training. To explain the Lysenko case, for example, he suggests that it is possible that the facts of genetics "may be *interpreted* from two different points of view," thus naively substituting a scientific question (if there be one) for the real issue, which is the political control of science. His assumptions encourage him to attempt the con-

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clusion, "even at the present state of our knowledge," that after World War II peace will be most strongly desired by the Soviet Union, least by the United States, with England and Germany in between. And he confesses that he finds it "difficult to understand why the Soviet Union insists on repatriating individuals who left the Soviet Union during World War II and do not desire to return." Mathematics is not yet capable of coping with the naivety of the mathematician himself.

III

THE 19th century saw the rise of mathematical statistics. From its origins in the treatment of games of chance, it was expanded to cope with the new problems posed by the development of insurance, and finally came to be recognized as fundamental to every science dealing with repetitive phenomena. This means the whole of science, for knowledge everywhere rests on the cumulation of data drawn from sequences of situations on whose basis predictions can be made as to the recurrence of similar situations. Mathematical statistics is the theory of the treatment of repeated—or multiple—observations in order to obtain all and only those conclusions for which such observations are evidence. This, and not merely the handling of facts stated in numerical terms, is what distinguishes statistics from other branches of quantitative mathematics.

The application of statistics to social phenomena far exceeds, in fruitfulness as well as extent, the use of mathematics of a fundamentally geometrical—i.e. postulational—or algebraic character in the social sciences. Social scientists themselves have made important contributions to mathematical statistics—which is a good indication of its usefulness to them in their work. Only two of the most recent contributions in the application of statistics to social phenomena can be dealt with here.

The first is a rather remarkable book by a Harvard linguist, G. K. Zipf, *Human Behavior and the Principle of Least Effort* (Addison-Wesley Press, 1949). Its basic conception is that man is fundamentally a user of tools confronted with a variety of jobs to do. Culture can be regarded as constituting a set of tools, and human behavior can be analyzed as the use of such tools in accord with the principle of minimizing the probable rate of work which must be done to perform the jobs that arise. It is this principle that Zipf calls "the law of least effort." As a consequence of it, he claims, an enormous variety of social phenomena exhibit certain regularities of distribution, in accordance with the principle that the tools nearest to hand, easiest to manipulate, and adapted to the widest variety of purposes are those which tend to be used most frequently. These regularities often take the form, according to Zipf, of a constant rank-frequency relationship, according to which the tenth most frequently used word, for instance, is used one-tenth as often as the most frequently used one of all. This is the case, for example, with James Joyce's *Ulysses* as well as with clippings from American newspapers.

A large part of Zipf's book deals with linguistic phenomena, since he is most at home in this field, and it is there that his results seem most fully established. But an enormous range of other subjects is also treated: evolution, sex, schizophrenia, dreams, art, population, war, income, fads, and many others. Many of these topics are dealt with statistically, as likewise conforming to the law of least effort; and all are discussed with originality and insight. For example, the cities in any country, according to Zipf, tend to show the same regularity—the tenth most populous city will have one-tenth as many people as the most populous, the one-hundredth most populous city will have one-hundredth as many. Where this pattern does not prevail, we have an indication of serious potential conflict. It seems that starting about 1820 the growing divisions between Northern and Southern economies in the United States could be seen by a break in this pattern, which reached a peak of severity around 1840, and disappeared after the Civil War!

But while this breadth of topic endows the book with a distinctive fascination, it also makes the reader skeptical of the validity of the theory it puts forward. In the human sciences, the scope of a generalization is usually inversely proportional to its precision and usefulness—at any rate, in the present state of our knowledge. Zipf's law, or something like it, is well known in physics as Maupertuis' principle of least action. But Zipf applies it to a much wider field of phenomena than physical flows of energy. It is understandable that action will follow some sort of least-action pattern *if* economy enters into its motivation and *if* the action is sufficiently rational. But that the law of least effort should be manifested everywhere in

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human conduct, as Zipf holds—indeed, "in all living process"—is difficult to believe.

That a theory is incredible is, of course, no logical objection whatever. And Zipf does not merely speculate; he presents an enormous mass of empirical evidence. The question is what it proves. It does not show, as he claims, the existence of "natural social laws," but, at best, only certain regularities. Brute empiricism is not yet science. Unless observed regularities can be brought into logical relation with other regularities previously observed, we remain at the level of description rather than explanation; and without explanation, we cannot attach much predictive weight to description. As a collection of data that deserve the careful attention of the social scientist, Zipf's work will have interest for some time to come. But something more precise and less universal than his principle of least effort will be required to transform that data into a body of scientific knowledge.

THE importance of clear conceptualization in giving scientific significance to observed fact is admirably expounded in the recently published fourth volume of the monumental *American Soldier* series (S. A. Stouffer, L. Guttman, et al., *Measurement and Prediction: Studies in Social Psychology in World War II*, Vol. IV, Princeton University Press, 1950). *Measurement and Prediction* deals with the study of attitudes. It is concerned with the development of methodological rather than substantive theory. It deals with the way in which attitudes —any attitudes—should be studied and understood, but says little about attitudes themselves. However, methodology here is not an excuse for irresponsibility in substantive assumptions, or for confusion as to the ultimate importance of a substantive theory of attitudes.

The major problem taken up is this: how can we tell whether a given set of characteristics is to be regarded as variations of some single underlying quality? Concretely, when do the responses to a questionnaire constitute expressions of a single attitude, and when do they express a number of attitudes? If there is such a single quality, how can we measure how much of it is embodied in each of the characteristics? If all the items on a questionnaire *do* deal with only one attitude, can we measure, in any meaningful sense, how favorable or unfavorable that attitude is, and how intensely it is held by the particular respondent?

This problem arises directly out of the practical—as well as the theoretical—side of opinion study. Consider the case of a poll designed to test the extent and intensity of anti-Semitism. Various questions are included: "Do you think the Jews have too much power?" "Do you think we should allow Jews to come into the country?" "Do you approve of what Hitler did to the Jews?" Some people give anti-Semitic answers to all the questions, some to a few, some to none. Is this because they possess varying amounts of a single quality that we may call "anti-Semitism"? Or is there really a mixture of two or more very different attitudes in the individual, present in varying proportions? If a person is against Jewish immigration, is this because he is against immigration or against Jews, and to what extent? And if there is a single quality such as anti-Semitism, what questions will best bring it out for study? It is problems such as these that the research reported on in *Measurement and Prediction* permits us to solve.

The approach taken stems from the work done in the past few decades by L. L. Thurstone and C. Spearman. Their problems were similar, but arose in a different field, the study of intelligence and other psychological characteristics. Their question was: do our intelligence tests determine a single quality called intelligence? Or do they actually tap a variety of factors, which though combining to produce the total intelligence score, are really quite different from each other? Thurstone and Spearman developed mathematical methods that in effect determined which items in a questionnaire were interdependent—that is, if a person answered *a*, he would tend to answer *b*, but not *c*. On the basis of such patterns, various factors of intelligence were discovered.

In opinion study, one inquires whether items of a questionnaire "hang together"—or, to use the technical term, whether they *scale*. A complex of attitudes is said to be *scalable* if it is possible to arrange the items in it in such a way that every person who answers "yes" to any item also answers "yes" to every item coming after it in the arrangement. In the case of anti-Semitism, we would consider the complex of anti-Semitism scalable—and therefore referring to a single factor in a person's attitudes, rather than including a few distinct attitudes—if we could order the questions in such a way that if someone answered any question in the

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list "anti-Semitically," he would answer all those following it "anti-Semitically." Attitudes on anti-Semitism would then have the same cumulative character as a series of questions on height—if a person answers "yes" to "Are you more than six feet tall?" we know he will answer "yes" to the question "Are you more than five and a half feet tall?" and all others down the list. This type of reduction of an apparently complex field of attitudes to the simple scheme of a series of cumulative questions is of great value. In *Measurement and Prediction* Louis Guttman describes how to determine whether a group of attitudes does "scale"—that is, does measure a single underlying reality.

Guttman developed, for example, such a scale for manifestations of fear in battle—vomiting, trembling, etc.: soldiers who vomit when faced with combat also report trembling, and so on down the scale; while those who report trembling do not necessarily report vomiting too. On the other hand, it turned out, when he studied paratroopers, various *kinds* of fear of very different types had to be distinguished, for the paratroopers' symptoms were not scalable in terms of a single variable.

One of the most direct applications of scaling methods is in the detection of spurious "causal" connections. We may find, for instance, that the attitude to the continuation of OPS by the government correlates closely with the attitude to farm subsidies. Scale analysis now makes it possible for us to provide an explanation for this fact by testing whether these two items do not in fact express a single attitude—say, the attitude to governmental controls.

Scale analysis permits us to handle another important problem. Suppose we find that 80 per cent of a group of soldiers tested agreed that "the British are doing as good a job as possible of fighting the war, everything considered," while only 48 per cent disagree with the statement that "the British always try to get other countries to do their fighting for them." How many soldiers are "favorable" toward the British? It is clear that we can get different percentages in answer to this question, depending on how we word our question. Scale analysis provides a method which yields what is called an "objective zero point": a division between the numbers of those "favorable" and those "unfavorable" that remains constant no matter what questions we ask about the British. The method demands that, besides asking a few questions testing the attitude, we also get a measure of the "intensity" with which the respondent holds his opinion—we ask for example, whether the respondent feels strongly, not so strongly, or is relatively indifferent about the matter. With this method, it turns out that if we asked a group of entirely different questions about the British, the application of the procedure for measuring the "objective zero point" would show the same result. This limited area of attitude comes to have the same objectivity as the temperature scale, which shows the same result whether we use an alcohol or a mercury thermometer.

Measurement and Prediction also presents, for the first time, a full description of Lazarsfeld's "latent structure" analysis. This is in effect a mathematical generalization of the scaling method of Guttman, which permits us to extend the type of inquiry that scale analysis makes possible into other areas. Scale analysis and latent structure analysis together form an important contribution to the development of more reliable methods of subjecting attitudes—and similar "qualities"—to precise and meaningful measurement.

The prediction part of *Measurement and Prediction* does not contain any comparable theoretical developments. For the most part, prediction in the social sciences today is not above the level of "enlightened common sense," as the authors recognize.

IV

The distinctive development in mathematics in the last one hundred years is the rise of a discipline whose central concept is neither number nor quantity, but *structure*. The mathematics of structure might be said to focus on qualitative differences. *Topology*, as the new discipline is called, is occupied with those properties of figures—conceived as sets of points—that are independent of mere differences of quantity. Squares, circles, and rectangles, of whatever size, are topologically indistinguishable from one another, or from any simple closed figure, however irregular. On the other hand, if a "hole" is inscribed in any of these figures, it thereby becomes qualitatively different from the rest.

Topology, more than most sectors of higher mathematics, deals with questions that have direct intuitive meaning. But intuition often misleads us as to the answers, when it does not

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fail us altogether. For instance, how many different colors are required to color *any* map so that no two adjoining countries have the same color? It is known, from topological analyses, that five colors are quite enough; but no one has been able to produce a map that needs more than four, or even to prove whether there could or could not be such a map.

It is paradoxical that the field of mathematics which deals with the most familiar subject matter is the least familiar to the non-mathematician. A smattering of geometry, algebra, and statistics is very widespread; topology is virtually unknown, even among social scientists sympathetic to mathematics. To be sure, the late Kurt Lewin's "topological psychology" has given the name much currency. But topology, for Lewin, provided only a notation. The rich content of his work bears no *logical* relation to the topological framework in which it is presented, as is clear from the posthumously published collection of his more important papers, *Field Theory in Social Science* (Harper, 1951). In these papers, talk about the "life space," and "paths," "barriers," and "regions" in it, are elaborately sustained metaphors. Such figures of speech are extraordinarily suggestive, but do not in themselves constitute a strict mathematical treatment of the "life space" in a topological geometry. The actual application of topology to psychology remained for Lewin a program and a hope.

One further development must be mentioned as playing an important role in the new approaches: the rise of symbolic logic. As in the case of topology, this discipline can be traced back to the 17th century, to Leibniz's ideas for a universal language; but not till the late 19th century did it undergo any extensive and precise development. Boolean algebra provided a mechanical method for the determination of the consequences of a given set of propositions (in another form, this is called the "calculus of propositions"). A few years later, De Morgan, Schroeder, and the founder of Pragmatism, Charles Peirce, investigated the formal properties of relations, leading to an elaborately abstract theory of relations. These results, together with work on the foundations of mathematics (like Peano's formulation of five postulates sufficing for the whole of arithmetic), were extended and systematized shortly after the turn of the century in Russell and Whitehead's monumental *Principia Mathematica.*

AMONG the recent applications to the study of man of this whole general body of ideas, one is especially celebrated; the theory of games presented by J. von Neumann and O. Morgenstern in *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (Princeton University Press, 1947). Here the focus is confined to problems of economics, but it is hoped that it will be extended to the whole range of man's social relations.

It may seem, superficially, that von Neumann and Morgenstern, in selecting games as a way of approaching the study of social organization, fall into the trap of oversimplification. But unlike Rashevsky, von Neumann and Morgenstern do not so much introduce simplifying assumptions in order to deal artificially wtih the whole complex social order as *select* relatively simple aspects of that order for analysis. Only after a theory adequate to the simple problems has been developed can the more complicated problems be attacked fruitfully. To be sure, the decision-maker cannot suspend action to satisfy the scruples of a scientific conscience; but neither can the scientist pretend to an advisory competence that he does not have, in order to satisfy practical demands.

While the theory of games does not deal with the social process in its full complexity, it is not merely a peripheral aspect of that process which it studies, but its very core. The aim is "to find the mathematically complete principles which define 'rational behavior' for the participants in a social economy, and to derive from them the general characteristics of that behavior." Games are analyzed because the pattern of rational behavior that they exhibit is the same as that manifested in social action, insofar as the latter does in fact involve rationality.

The theory is concerned with the question of what choice of strategy is rational when all the relevant probabilities are known and the outcome is not determined by one's choice alone. It is in the answer to this question that the new mathematics enters. And with this kind of mathematics, the social sciences finally abandon the imitation of natural science that has dogged so much of their history.

The authors first present a method of applying a numerical scale other than the price system to a set of human preferences. A man might prefer a concert to the theater, and either to staying at home. If we assign a utility of "1" to the last alternative, we know that going to

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the theater must be assigned a higher number, and the concert a higher one still. But how much higher? Suppose the decision were to be made by tossing two coins, the first to settle whether to go to the theater or not, the second (if necessary) to decide between the remaining alternatives. If the utility of the theater were very little different from that of staying at home, most of the time (three-fourths, to be exact) the outcome would be an unhappy one; similarly, if the theater and concert had comparable utilities, the outcome would be usually favorable. Just how the utilities compare, therefore, could be measured by allowing the second coin to be a loaded one. When it is a matter of indifference to the individual whether he goes to the theater or else tosses the loaded coin to decide whether he hears the concert or stays home, the loading of the coin provides a numerical measure of the utilities involved.

Once utility can be measured in a way that does not necessarily correspond to monetary units, a theory of rational behavior can be developed which takes account of other values than monetary ones. A game can be regarded as being played, not move by move, but on the basis of an over-all *strategy* that specifies beforehand what move is to be made in every situation that could possibly arise in the game. Then, for every pair of strategies selected—one by each player in the game—the rules of the game determine a *value* for the game: namely, what utility it would then have for each player. An optimal strategy is one guaranteeing a certain value for the game even with best possible play on the part of the opponent. Rational behavior, that is to say, is characterized as the selection of the strategy which minimizes the maximum loss each player can sustain.

If a game has only two players and is "zero-sum"—whatever is won by one player being lost by the other, and vice versa—then, if each player has "perfect information" about all the previous moves in the game, there always exists such an optimal strategy for each player. The outcome of a rationally played game can therefore be computed in advance; in principle, chess is as predictable as ticktacktoe.

Not every game, however, is as completely open as chess. In bridge and poker, for example, we do not know what cards are in the other players' hands; and this is ordinarily the situation in the strategic interplay of management and labor, or in the relations among sovereign states. In such cases rationality consists in playing several strategies, each with a mathematically determined probability. Consider a type of matching pennies in which each player is permitted to place his coin as he chooses. If we were to select heads always, we should be quickly found out; even if we favored heads somewhat, our opponent (assuming it is he who wins when the coins match) could always select heads and thereby win more than half the time. But if we select heads half the time—not in strict alternation, to be sure, but at random—then, no matter what our opponent does, we cannot lose more than half the time. Rational play consists in what is actually done in the game: we toss the coin each time to determine, as it were, whether we select heads or tails. Of course, in more complex games our strategies are not always to be "mixed" in equal proportions. The fundamental theorem of the theory of games is that for every two-person zero-sum game, no matter how complex the rules or how great the range of possible strategies open to each player, there always exists some specific pattern of probabilities of strategies which constitutes rational play. It minimizes the maximum loss that each player can sustain, not in every play of the game, but in the long run. And there is a mathematical solution that tells us what this strategy is.

Unfortunately, many games are not "zero-sum": in the game between management and labor, utilities are created in the process of play; in war they are destroyed. It is simply not true in such cases that what one side loses the other gains, or vice versa. In such cases, the mathematics of the "zero-sum" game will not apply. Moreover, many games have more than two players: a number of manufacturers may be competing for a single market. Here the mathematics of a two-person game will not hold. The first difficulty, however, can be absorbed into the second. A non-"zero-sum" two-person game can be regarded as a three-person game, where the third person wins or loses whatever is lost or won by the other two together.

But how are we to solve games of more than two persons? Only if coalitions are formed, in effect making the game a two-person one. This is not an unrealistic assumption, since, obviously, if two players can coordinate their

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strategies against a third, they will enjoy a special advantage: odd-man-out is the simple but fundamental principle in such situations. For such games, however, the theory does not provide a detailed solution, for it cannot determine what is a rational division of the spoils between the members of a coalition in the way it can determine what is a rational strategy for the coalition as a whole. And here, of course, is the great difficulty in politics. The United States and Russia may be conceived of, in this theory, as playing a two-person non-"zero-sum" game with nature as the third player: only nature wins from atomic destruction, only nature loses if resources need not be diverted to military purposes. But the coalition of men against nature still leaves open how the utilities acquired in the game are to be divided between the participants. And here conflicting interests stand in the way of the joint interests that would make rational a coalition strategy.

From our present standpoint, the important outcome of the theory is to show that there exists a rigorously mathematical approach to precisely those aspects of the study of man that have seemed in the past to be least amenable to mathematical treatment—questions of conflicting or parallel interest, perfect or imperfect information, rational decision or chance effect. Mathematics is of importance for the social sciences not merely in the study of those aspects in which man is assimilable to inanimate nature, but precisely in his most human ones. On this question the theory of games leaves no room for doubt.

But a mathematical theory of games is one thing, and a mathematical theory of society another. Von Neumann and Morgenstern, it must be said, never confuse the two. Many fundamental difficulties remain, even within the limitations of the games framework. The theory of games involving many players is in a very unsatisfactory state; there is no way at present of comparing the utilities of different persons; and the whole theory is so far a static one, unable to take account of the essential learning process which (it may be hoped) takes place in the course of the selection of real-life strategies. Yet the theory has already provided enormous stimulation to mathematical and substantive research, and much more can be expected from it. Above all, it has shown that the resources of the human mind for the exact understanding of man himself are by no means already catalogued in the existing techniques of the natural sciences.

Thus the application of mathematics to the study of man is no longer a programmatic hope, but an accomplished fact. The books we have surveyed are by no means the only mathematical approaches to problems of social science published even within the past few years. For instance, K. Arrow's *Social Choice and Individual Values* (Wiley, 1951) is a penetrating application of postulational method and the logical theory of relations to the problem of combining, in accord with democratic principles, individual preferences into a representative set of preferences for the group as a whole. Harold Lasswell and his associates report in *The Language of Politics* (G. W. Stewart, 1949) on the procedures and results of the application of the now widely familiar content-analysis techniques to political discourse, in order to objectify and quantify the role of ideologies and utopias in politics. Shannon and Weaver's *Mathematical Theory of Communication* (University of Illinois Press, 1950) reprints the classic papers in which Claude Shannon first developed the precise theory of information now being applied in cybernetics, linguistics, and elsewhere. There are a number of other books; and dozens of papers have appeared in the professional journals of a wide variety of disciplines, including such preeminently "qualitative" fields as social organization, psychiatry, and even literary history.

But if the new language is widely spoken, there are also wide local differences in dialects, and many individual peculiarities of usage. Yet on the scientific scene, this is in itself scarcely objectionable. New problems call for new methods, and if for a time these remain *ad hoc*, it is only from such a rich variety of approaches that systematic and general theories can emerge. No such theories of society or even of part of the social process have yet been developed, though, as we have seen, there have been some premature attempts. But the situation is promising. If the mathematics employed is not merely notational, if it is not merely an "illustration" of an abstract methodology, if it does not outstrip the availability of data and especially of ideas, there is reason to hope that it will eventually contribute as much to the study of man as it already has to the understanding of the rest of nature.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Vanishing Jewish Comedian

To the Editor of Commentary:

In general I agree with the thesis of Sam Levenson in your August issue ("The Dialect Comedian Should Vanish") that the so-called dialect Jew-comedian is passé and we need not mourn his demise. With the gradual passing of the immigrant generation, he no longer corresponds to any real living type in American Jewry—if he ever did—and in his day he made no great contribution to an understanding of the American Jewish picture. I also agree that the *Bagels and Yox* type of entertainment has no place on the American public stage or radio, whether seen by Jew or Gentile, not only for reasons of its basic vulgarity but also for its essential spuriousness—it represents no genuine kind of Jewish life existing here other than in the imagination of its script-writers.

But when Mr. Levenson suggests that we bowdlerize Sholom Aleichem because of the possible distortion that could be made of him by an anti-Semite he is guilty of a rather serious violation of both morality and art. He wants us to adopt a double standard—one for writing for a Jewish public and the other for the uninitiated Gentile. For one thing it doesn't give our Gentile neighbors much credit for insight or intelligence and it's something of an insult to assume that in their benighted condition they can never hope to plumb the esoteric freemasonry of Jewish humor or art. Wouldn't his own suggestion throw a cloud over the discerning Gentile's conception of the Jew, learning that we have two sets of literary values—one for Hebrew and Yiddish and another for those languages which read from left to right? Moreover the anti-Semites in their perpetual "research" for anti-Jewish "documentation" are by no means so scrupulous as to resort to ransacking the Jewish classics. Can't you just imagine what the benign and gentle Solomon Rabinowitz would say if he heard of this—he lived not so long ago when there was no lack of professional literary Jew-baiters. Sholom Aleichem, despite the genre he worked in, did not live his entire life in the ivory tower of an all-Jewish *shtetl*. He was a contemporary of Kishinev, the Dreyfus affair, and modern "scientific" anti-Semitism.

The final episode mentioned by Mr. Levenson—the reception given him as "Mr. Livingston" by the New Englander of Mayflower stock—speaks for itself rather pointedly. Was it really such an achievement to be recognized as an anonymous Mr. Livingston rather than as Sam Levenson whose humor is at the same time American and unmistakably Jewish? The choice is not necessarily between Mr. Mefoofsky and Mr. Livingston. . . .

B. G. Kayfetz

Toronto, Canada

To the Editor of Commentary:

I feel that there are several exceedingly destructive implications in Sam Levenson's interesting piece. Underlying Levenson's thesis, I believe, there is a viewpoint that tends to paralyze any creative personality, whether he is operating in one of the popular arts, or in a serious medium, such as the novel. Levenson himself, as an artist, has been a victim of his viewpoint. . . . I have had the pleasure of knowing Levenson and studying him at some length for an article in *The Saturday Evening Post*. (It appears in the August 23 issue.) Amusing and sharp as he may be on television —and heaven knows he is one of the few younger comedians with some gusto—he is far more entertaining, expresses himself with much more verve and richness, when he works in Jewish dialect. . . . Do comedians like Willie Howard, Fannie Brice, Lou Holtz, either cause, stimulate, or encourage anti-Semitism? It seems to me that this theory is an absurd oversimplification of a complex social problem. I know that Levenson, like so many other of our censors with the new look, truly loves and respects culture. But there seems to be a good deal of timidity in his attitude about art: either he is afraid of the artist, or he is afraid that the general public may not have *seychel* enough to distinguish between a Smith and Dale sketch and the human being who owns a butcher shop or a drugstore or a clothing factory. . . . Censorship is bad enough when it comes from the Boston puritans—but let's not have it from persons who should know better.

Maurice Zolotow

Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

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American Orthodoxy

To the Editor of Commentary:

Robert Langbaum's ("Liberal Judaism as a Living Faith," Commentary, July 1952) choice of Liberal Judaism as a living faith would be more convincing if he presented it . . . as an apologia of an individual who has reacted against aspects of the Yiddish ghetto. . . . Orthodox Judaism has existed and exists in land after land where the Yiddish culture of the ghetto is altogether unknown. It existed in Europe for centuries before there was a ghetto in Eastern Europe. It existed among free Americans in the United States for two centuries before part of that ghetto was transplanted to New York's Lower East Side. Therefore for Mr. Langbaum to say that "The American Jews who rejected Orthodoxy were first of all rejecting slum culture; they were rejecting an immigrant status. . . ." may be a true characterization of the ignorance of Judaism and the mental confusion of many who identified historic Judaism with the unhappy sociological characteristics of the Yiddish ghetto; but factually it is an indefensible generalization.

He states further that Liberal Judaism "could be fairly judged only against an Orthodoxy—if there is such an Orthodoxy we would want to hear a great deal about it—that is facing up to the same active recognition of the American scene as is Liberal Judaism." Mr. Langbaum could readily hear a great deal about such an Orthodox Judaism were he to acquaint himself with something of American Jewish religious history and with traditional Judaism as it has been lived in America outside of the ghetto. He would do well to come to know the historic Shearith Israel synagogue in New York, a congregation preparing for its tercentenary. In its membership he will find, from its president down, Orthodox men and women whose families living in freedom in America have been facing up to an active recognition of the American scene for more than two centuries. There and not in the Liberal Judaism that is largely an importation from Germany will he find the Judaism to which history must accord the name of American Judaism.

D. de Sola Pool

Shearith Israel
New York City

The German Students

To the Editor of Commentary:

The most disturbing aspect of the Veit Harlan controversy (Hilde Walter, "German Students Seek 'Peace With the Jews,'" August 1952) is not the revelation of police brutality and National Socialist sentiment, but rather the clear indication that Germany's idealistic young intellectuals have little conception of the meaning of democracy. Their confusions on the subject are manifestly shared by Miss Walter.

It is certainly permissible to voice dissatisfaction with the lenient treatment of prominent ex-Nazis, and to demand more stringent laws to deal with them. It is quite another matter to overrule a court decision by mob violence, which is lynch-law; to use stink-bombs and mass-picketing to keep people from seeing an innocuous movie, which is an assault on freedom of expression by private censorship. The end result of such procedures must be the transfer of political decisions from parliament to the barricades and the replacement of debate by terrorism. Miss Walter is pleased that the new generation of students is not repeating the errors of the Weimar period. On the contrary, that is exactly what they *are* doing. Then too, the "legality" of movies, speeches, and leaflets was decided by stink-bombs and blackjacks. The modern suppressors are no more entitled to the label of democracy than their Nazi and Communist forebears. . . .

The punishment of the Nazis was wholly inadequate; many more should have been executed. But the time for revenge is past. If a healthy democracy is to emerge in Germany, politics must cease its futile rotation around an ex-Nazi, ex-anti-Nazi axis.

Victor Fox

New York City

On Civil Liberties

To the Editor of Commentary:

Permit me to thank Irving Kristol for clarifying the meaning of "civil liberties." On page 85 of the July issue of Commentary, in his answer to Alan F. Westin, he writes, "A civil liberty is a freedom confirmed by our constitution and our laws."

This makes my concept of civil liberty all wrong. It was my impression that when some Southern states write segregation and poll tax laws, they are denying Negroes their civil rights, and when Russia enacts laws restricting speech, press, and other natural human activities they too are restricting civil liberties. The same might have been said about Hitler and the Nuremberg laws, but I see I was wrong.

Louis M. Rabinowitz

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Two Varieties of Democracy

THE RISE OF TOTALITARIAN DEMOCRACY. By J. L. TALMON. Beacon Press. 366 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

THE problem of liberalism today is essentially the problem of a surviving rhetoric and a crumbling philosophy. It is true that this is also the problem of conservatism, and to a more extreme degree; our technological society is moving with a resolution that scornfully converts all conservative phraseology into romantic cant. But conservatism can afford, in principle, to fall back on a stubborn and mindless balking, whereas liberalism is committed to the general idea and the reasoned program, and its crisis is therefore the more poignant.

Among the key words of modern liberalism that now ring somewhat hollow are Progress, Revolution, and Liberty. Traditionally, all of these terms have been summary evocations of a world-view. Progress was the movement of time, not merely from the known to the unknown, but from the worse to the better; it contained within itself the fact of change and the positive evaluation inevitably accruing to it. Revolution was not merely a political overturn, but one that held a promise for the future —otherwise it was Reaction. Liberty was not merely the absence of unjust restraint, but the absence of all possible restraint—restraint itself was regarded as at best a necessary evil. Beneath these studied ambiguities were the basic premises: man is a "progressive being" (the phrase is John Stuart Mill's) whose nature is good and will improve if its potentialities are permitted to flower; history is the record of the struggle between Freedom and Authority, Reason and Prejudice, Left and Right, with the victory of the former assured by the growing preponderance among mankind of rational opinions and rational conduct.

It is no longer fashionable to state these postulates baldly, but they receive an unspoken assent that has far-reaching consequences. One such, is to saddle liberalism with a bad conscience in the face of Communism, which claims these premises for itself, as "scientific" truths, and which further claims to draw the ultimate conclusions and to be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. (In the same way, conservatives have their own bad conscience before fascism.) This liberal bad conscience is evident in various and not so subtle forms. Let a Communist denounce racial or social inequality in the United States, and the liberal will reply with a defiant apologetic quite unlike the contemptuous indifference with which he reacted to the same accusation from Dr. Goebbels. That Mao's China is excluded from the United Nations is, for the liberal, an unhappy fact, even if temporarily justified; in contrast, that Franco's Spain may be admitted to the United Nations is a calamitous prospect. The small neo-Nazi movement in Germany provokes the liberal to anxious polemic and calls for action; the infinitely larger Communist movement in France moves him to sermons on the desirability of improving the French economic and social order. Everywhere, the very existence of a flourishing Communist movement is interpreted by the liberal as a *moral* indictment of the society threatened by it.

Under the circumstances, it would seem to be time for a revaluation of the liberal philosophy and a revision of liberal political theory. It is obviously right to begin this process with a reinterpretation of the French Revolution, which opened our modern epoch and to which we must return every time we wish to grapple with the meaning of that epoch. After having been a "great event" for more than a century, the French Revolution has become a mirror for our perplexities. Trotsky felt compelled to discuss the relation of Robespierre to Napoleon in order to understand that of Lenin to Stalin. Guglielmo Ferrero had to come to terms with Robespierre's *sans-culottes* in order to pass final judgment on Mussolini's Fascists. Similarly, J. L. Talmon, in order to assess the significance of Communist totalitarianism, goes in search

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of the origin of the Reign of Terror, that first injection of *la Grande Peur* into the bloodstream of modern society.

THE RISE OF TOTALITARIAN DEMOCRACY is the first of a three-volume series; the second will take up 19th-century Europe, the third will deal with Russia and Eastern Europe from 1860 to the present. The trilogy, when completed, will mark no Copernican revolution in contemporary thought, if the first volume is a fair specimen. But—again on the basis of the first volume—it will be informative and stimulating, and will encourage the right kinds of questions to be asked of our historical experience.

Mr. Talmon is concerned with drawing a distinction between "liberal democracy" and "totalitarian democracy," both of which he sees as arising in the 18th century and coming into collision in the 20th. "Liberal democracy" regards politics as a matter of trial and error, and political systems as pragmatic contrivances; it is solicitous of individualism and recognizes that there are legitimate areas of human activity outside the realm of the political. "Totalitarian democracy" preaches absolute truth and a messianic vision of a "pre-ordained, harmonious and perfect scheme of things, to which men are irresistibly driven, and at which they are bound to arrive"; its politics is but one aspect of an all-embracing philosophy. Both "liberal" and "totalitarian" democracy affirm the value of liberty; but for the first, liberty means individual spontaneity, for the second, reconciliation to an absolute, collective purpose—a kind of self-willed slavery, in fact. Both versions of "democracy" arose in the thinking of the 18th-century *philosophes,* but "liberal democracy" retreated before the bloody attempt to establish the City of God on earth and took refuge in the matter-of-factness of Anglo-American practice, while "totalitarian democracy" culminated eventually in Stalinism.

There are, according to Talmon, three stages in the development of "totalitarian democracy" in the French Revolution. First, there was the Rousseauist intellectual background, which rejected all existing institutions as relics of despotism and clerical obscurantism, and which demanded a complete renovation of society so that it would be an expression of the General Will—this last being no mere consensus but an objective standard of virtue and reason that imperfect humanity must be coerced into obeying in order to enjoy a *bonheur de médiocrité* for which it was as yet ill-prepared. Second, there was the Reign of Terror, when an "enlightened" vanguard of Jacobins undertook to impose the General Will—when Robespierre acted out his role as "the bloody hand of Rousseau," as Heine called him. Third, there was the post-Thermidorean conspiracy of Babeuf and his associates, which added to political messianism the doctrine of economic communism, thereby pointing the way to Marx.

All this is set forth with ample quotation from original sources and striking illustrative detail. As an essay on the French Revolution, it is of more than ordinary interest. But as a tract for our times, it has some dangerous shortcomings.

AN ESSENTIAL defect of Mr. Talmon's analysis is that he takes the *ideology* of "totalitarian democracy" as corresponding to an actual *fact.* In a sense he is deceived by the very myth he has set out to expose. That the Communists are sincere in asserting their regimes are "people's democracies" is no excuse for Mr. Talmon's believing it, even if only to disapprove. What can it possibly mean to state, as he does, that "modern totalitarian democracy is a dictatorship resting on popular enthusiasm"? Or that the Jacobin dictatorship was a "dictatorship of the popular masses"—after he has himself shown how the elections of 1793 were rigged? How is it that Mr. Talmon can declare solemnly that the Directory, which replaced the tyranny of Robespierre, "restricted popular sovereignty, freedom of speech, and discussion"? Restricted in comparison with what—the Reign of Terror?

It is one thing to explore, as Mr. Talmon ably does, the roots of Communist totalitarianism in early liberal and democratic thought. It is quite another to conclude, as Mr. Talmon also unfortunately does, that Communism is—in reality and not merely in theory—a democratic movement! The distinction between ideology and plain truth is ever more difficult to make in our time, and it is therefore all the more precious.

The source of this bizarre error is worth a mention, for it involves a misreading of certain 19th-century prophets that is rapidly becoming the standard commentary. Outstanding among these prophets is Alexis de Tocqueville, who supplies the motto for Mr. Talmon's book: "I think, then, that the species of oppression by which democratic nations are menaced is unlike

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anything that ever before existed in the world; our contemporaries will find no prototype of it in their memories." Tocqueville may or may not have been right, but he was certainly *not* talking about totalitarianism. The "species of oppression" to which he referred was that "conformity" of a democratic society which so repelled the 19th-century European visitor to America, and which led Tocqueville to write, elsewhere in his *Democracy in America,* "I do not know of a country where there is less intellectual independence and less freedom of discussion than in America." We find these sentiments odd, almost incomprehensible—but perhaps that is because we are democrats, and are content to remain such.

THERE is no connection, causal or otherwise, between the "conformity" (or "uniformity") of democratic life—or what is called this by aristocratic-minded Europeans—and the ruthless terrorization of man by the totalitarian state. To be sure, it is possible for a totalitarian elite to have an ideology in which the concept of "democracy" plays a crucial part, and this Mr. Talmon demonstrates was true of the Jacobins and is true, too, of the Communists. But this should lead us, and should have led Mr. Talmon, to wonder how intrinsic is the relation between the idea of "democracy" as developed by the Enlightenment and the virtues of democratic government as we know it.

For Mr. Talmon's division between a "liberal democracy," empirical, skeptical, and rational, and a "totalitarian democracy," doctrinaire, enthusiastic, and rationalist, is far too superficially made. Is it really correct to locate the origin of both these streams in the 18th-century Enlightenment? Is the vigor of democratic government in the Anglo-Saxon world really to be attributed simply to a different turning of the same mood and ideology that is represented by Robespierre? After all, Edmund Burke was no liberal or democrat as Rousseau or Jefferson understood these terms. Yet it is the Burkian idea of politics—as a human activity *bounded* by ethical *commandments,* in contrast to the distinctively modern conception of it as an activity aiming at the *realization,* here and now, of ethical *ideals*—which is at the core of Anglo-American practice. And this idea itself flows from a pre-Enlightenment attitude toward man and his place in the cosmos. Perhaps if we wish to reinvigorate responsible political thinking today, we shall have to go to sources more deep than the Enlightenment and its adoration of human innocence, its impatience with human limitation, its lust for redemption.

A Contemporary Koheleth

KOHELETH—THE MAN AND HIS WORLD. By ROBERT GORDIS. Jewish Theological Seminary. 396 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by ARTHUR HERTZBERG

THE pious editor of the book of Koheleth (Ecclesiastes), fearful of what its skepticism might do to the faith of the young, concluded the volume with a deprecatory note of warning; "Of the making of many books there is no end and much study wears one's strength away." Despite this caution many authors have been attracted through the ages to the heterodox verses of the worldly moralist. The Midrashic commentators, in an elaborate phrase by phrase reinterpretation, produced a devoutly pious Koheleth, a rabbi like themselves, and some of the more radical of the modern Biblical scholars have seen in the author a Greek philosopher, an intellectually assimilated Jew who strangely found his place in the sacred canon. There has been no dearth of books about Koheleth and yet one reads Dr. Gordis's summation of his studies in this difficult text with profound gratitude.

The frame within which Dr. Gordis presents his new translation consists of an excellent introduction which discusses the thought and personality of Koheleth in relation to his milieu, and a long, very learned technical commentary of almost two hundred pages in which the introductory generalizations are patiently substantiated by the exegesis of chapter and verse. Quite obviously very little, either ancient or modern, that has ever been written about any part of the text has escaped his research. Through the forest of suggested interpretations he moves surely, though reasonably, giving every suggestion its due as he fixes the meaning of disputed passages. Out of his labors there arises the figure of an upper-class skeptic, a man of large affairs living in the retired twilight of his life and pondering the meaning of human existence in the spirit of somber and often tragic hedonism.

Thus Dr. Gordis's Koheleth is a man without illusions, no more certain of the lack of faith than he is of faith, "seeking the purpose of life and lamenting his ignorance." Such a

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Koheleth, it might be maintained, is merely a figment of the contemporary mind creating him in its own image, but Dr. Gordis's close analysis of the text makes it more than plausible that the Koheleth with whom we would be most at home is actually the Koheleth of the Bible. This is, in essence, an achievement not only of textual scholarship, but of poetic and philosophic imagination.

THE undergirding of Dr. Gordis's construction is his solutions to various of the scholarly problems of the book. In opposition to such eminent authorities as Charles Cutler Torvery and H. L. Ginsberg, he offers a most plausible defense of the view that Koheleth wrote not in Aramaic but in the Hebrew of the present text, an opinion in which Dr. Gordis has been joined by W. F. Albright. Those difficult passages which others have explained as misunderstandings or literal translations from a conjectured Aramaic original are, in Dr. Gordis's view, examples of a stage in the development of the Hebrew language somewhere between the late classical and the Hebrew of the Mishnah. The idiom of Koheleth thus becomes not that of a Jew who wrote most easily in the increasingly hellenized Aramaic *lingua franca* of his time—which, if true, makes it all the more likely that Koheleth reflects foreign thought and influence—but that of one whose unique use of Hebrew is in itself a link in the chain of development of the sacred tongue.

Of even greater importance is the problem of the unity of the book. The opinions expressed in Koheleth stand in often bewildering contradiction to one another. For example, Koheleth both praises joy (8:15) and condemns it (2:2), regards wisdom as of great value (2:13) and derogates it (6:8), and clings to life (9:4) and nonetheless prefers death (4:2). These difficulties and many others like them were prominent among the reasons which motivated the rabbis of the Talmud to consider excluding the book from the sacred canon. Indeed, long before the heyday of 19th-century Biblical scholarship, with its prevailing tendency towards finding the work of many authors, editors, and redactors in each book of the Bible, no less an authority than Abraham Ibn Ezra scouted the possibility, in his comments on 7:3, that the very name Koheleth means etymologically a "community" and that the book is therefore an anthology of the writings of a school of disciples of the wise King Solomon! At least on the surface, Ibn Ezra refuted this critical view and reconciled the apparent contradictions by use of a distinction among the three aspects of the soul.

Like Ibn Ezra before him, Dr. Gordis defends the unity of the book. Towards this end he advances his most striking hypothesis, the theory that many of the seemingly contradictory verses are in actuality proverbs or opinions which Koheleth is quoting in order to refute or qualify. Dr. Gordis buttresses this theory convincingly by citing comparable literary usages in other books of Biblical wisdom literature and in the Talmud. As a result certain difficult passages become at once clear and striking. For example, the King James version for 9:17 to 10:1 reads as follows:

"The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroyeth much good.

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor; so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor."

Dr. Gordis, using his quotation theory, renders this same passage:

"It is said, 'The words of the wise spoken quietly are heard better than the ranting of the king of fools' and 'Wisdom is better than weapons'; but I say, 'One fool can destroy much good,' and 'As dying flies befoul the perfumer's ointment, so a little folly can outweigh the abundance of wisdom.' "

There is no need to point out in further detail the greater clarity and sense of Dr. Gordis's version.

IN THIS connection a word needs to be said about the literary style of his translation. It is unfair to cavil at Dr. Gordis's fluent contemporary English and retreat to the more majestic cadences of the King James version, as some reviewers did six years ago when an earlier edition of his rendering appeared accompanied by a brief popular introduction. The purpose of his translation is not to provide a substitute for the original Hebrew but to be, in effect, a compressed commentary. It is a crystallization of Dr. Gordis's almost always reasonable and frequently brilliant analysis and exegesis. As a result of these labors the notorious difficulties of the individual verses recede into the background. Dr. Gordis's distinctive achievement is to have succeeded in replacing a complex text with a complex and fascinating thinker.

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A clear and thoughtful examination of government's role in our economic sphere

DEMOCRACY AND THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

by ROBERT M. MACIVER

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An estimate of Dr. Gordis's work would not be complete without discussion of some of the larger questions of Biblical studies the very existence of his volume brings to the foreground. Until quite recently the relationship of Jewish scholarship to the modern study of the Bible has been largely a paradox. Though the first flourishing of *Jüdische Wissenschaft* was contemporary with the classical period of Bible criticism, Jewish scholars, quite evidently fearing the religious consequences of approaching the Sacred Canon with the new critical methods, almost abandoned the Book of Books to Christian investigators. However, the new study of the Bible could not be ignored indefinitely, both because the documentary hypothesis was becoming too well established and because, in the hands of Christian scholars, modern methods were producing, with all the prestige of seeming scientific validity, the old theological rabbit out of the hat, a reassertion of the inferiority of Biblical Jewish religion to the Christian dispensation. It was not without cause that Solomon Schechter snorted at the turn of the century that "the Higher Criticism is the Higher Anti-Semitism." Except for those who remain undeviatingly orthodox, therefore, a Jewish Biblical criticism had become an indispensable necessity.

These crucial needs have so far been filled by Jewish scholarship in the 20th century in varying degrees. One thinks immediately of Yehezkel Kaufman's great synthetic work still in progress, *Toledot ha-Amunah he-Yisraelit* (none of it is as yet available in English translation) and of Martin Buber's contributions towards making the Revelation real for modern men.

However, with all due respect to the merits of the presently existing commentaries in both Hebrew and English, there is as yet nothing approaching a contemporary Rashi. The great merit of Dr. Gordis's work on Koheleth is that it arouses such reflections. Implicit in his translation and commentary is an approach, compounded of a conservative respect for the text, a sense of the organic unity of the Jewish spirit, and a synthetic use of all modern Biblical disciplines, by which a significant contemporary Jewish interpretation of the whole of the Bible could be created.

One ventures to hope that it will be the first of a shelf of twenty-four comparable volumes which will present the Jew of today with his Bible.

Old-Time Religion

RELIGION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE 1765-1840. By WILLIAM WARREN SWEET. Scribner's. 338 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by EDWARD N. SAVETH

RELIGION is a neglected area of American historiography. The point of view expressed by the late J. Franklin Jameson before the 1907 meeting of the American Historical Association—"He who would understand the American of past and present times . . . may find in the history of American religion the closest approach to the continuous record he desires"—has encountered few takers among American historians.

One of the more important scholars who did follow this lead is Professor William Warren Sweet, for many years professor of the history of American Christianity at the University of Chicago and more recently associated with Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Professor Sweet is in the process of writing a four-volume history of religion in America of which *Religion in Colonial America,* published in 1942, was the first. The present volume covers the years 1765 to 1840.

In this period, Sweet reminds us, American churches were controlled by laymen to whom religion was more than the passive acceptance of a formal creed. Rather was the theology of the American one "that could be preached, that would influence everyday life and get things done." In fact, asserts Professor Sweet, "the American theologians until very recent years have been preachers, not scholars who dwelt in ivory towers." And he might also have added concerning the current scene that clerical control of our churches has increased enormously since the period covered by this book; that dogma has crystallized; and that the sects are increasingly inclined to organize into monoliths like the National Council of Churches.

With the layman pretty much in the driver's seat, the churches tended to follow and not lead the dominant secular movements of the late 18th and early 19th centuries: the American Revolution, the establishment of a separate nationality in a cultural sense, and the continuous push westward of the American people. During the Revolutionary crisis, the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians were staunch supporters

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of the Patriot cause because of their long-standing quarrel with the Church of England. But the Methodists, too, were strong advocates of independence despite the pro-Tory pronouncements of their founder, John Wesley, in England. Colonial Anglicans contributed the largest proportion of Loyalists, mainly because of the fact that the Church of England had not established a separate organization in colonial America and American Anglicans were dependent upon the mother country for ministers. Even so, the Anglicans contributed the largest number of signers of the Declaration of Independence and more than their share of Patriot leaders. And once the war was over, an independent American Anglican church was established which, like the churches of other denominations, had severed all significant formal ties with England.

A TREMENDOUS task confronted the newly organized national churches. The Revolutionary War produced, as one religious leader observed, "a lamentable decay of vital piety," a prevalence of "vice and degeneracy of manners" that called for repentance and reformation. There was also a steady flow of settlers westward and both in the older and newer communities the churches had to expand their role. Professor Sweet strongly emphasizes—to my mind, overemphasizes—the role of religion in bringing "culture" to the benighted hinterlands. While he makes clear his disagreement with Timothy Flint, the Eastern missionary who described the West as a "sink of iniquity" and the Westerners as "little more than heathen," at the same time he follows Horace Bushnell, who declared barbarism to be the West's first danger, in titling a chapter "Barbarism vs. Revivalism." Its generous quotations of frontier religious songs ("The Devil, Calvin and Tom Paine/ May hate the Methodists in vain;/ Their doctrines shall be downward hurled/ The Methodists shall take the world") make it the most interesting chapter in the book. But it is questionable whether it was only—or primarily—"revivalism" that fought the West's "barbarism."

As Professor Sweet describes the mushroom growth of religious sects in this period and tells of their dogmas and adherents, his book gains in interest. The glimpses he affords of Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, preaching openly against marriage and sexual intercourse and hailed by her followers as the reincarnation of Christ; of John Humphrey Noyes, who founded at Oneida, New York, in 1848 a community dedicated to Christian perfectionism to be achieved in part by integrating "sexual love with the life of the spirit," and by making physical love the "outward sign of inward spiritual grace"; of Joseph Smith, to whom the angel Moroni revealed golden plates inscribed in "the reformed Egyptian tongue" from which the tenets of Mormonism were revealed —make us wish that the author had lingered longer in the company of these interesting people and that his gifts of character analysis were sharper. One wishes, too, that the author had dug deeper into his subject matter and had not relied on such obvious sources as the Dictionary of American Biography.

However, one's main objection to the book must be to its larger conception. This is, plainly, a narrative of the history of American religion and not an account of religion in American culture, as the author intended. Professor Sweet has made no real effort to reveal the impact of religion upon the larger pattern of American civilization. For example, he has no account of the role of Western religion in so significant a movement as Jacksonian democracy. Part of this difficulty arises out of the fact that religion is

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not the key to American history that Sweet, following Jameson, contends it is. And it is plain that Professor Sweet is a little too dogmatic in his easy rejection of the frontier hypothesis and economic determinism—approaches which are indeed not without fault—in favor of his own religious view of American history.

Nevertheless, while the book is neither philosophical nor deeply penetrative, Sweet is a good narrative historian. He is, moreover, a man of deep and enduring religious faith, some of which he communicates to the reader.

Success Story

ASPHALT AND DESIRE. By FREDERIC MORTON. Harcourt, Brace. 282 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

ASPHALT AND DESIRE was written by a European-born and still not quite "Americanized" young writer, and is told from the point of view of a capable twenty-year-old graduate of Hunter College who might to some extent represent the younger declassed intellectual of the 40's. It is a virtuoso performance of acclimatization and alertness to one's surroundings, flashing a casual intimacy with Tin Pan Alley, racy repartees, and urban poise, suavely singing out characteristic American refrains: the adolescent's "Don't be facetious" at an off-color joke, the slaphappy male's "wha hoppen?" of the 50's, the Bronx mother's coy "You mind tasting a little kosher food, it's delicious," the Andrew Sisters' relentless "Get Your Kicks on Route Sixty-Six."

Frederic Morton means his novel to be an ironic version of the American success story with a strident and self-destructive heroine. "Give them a hot-foot," an already disabused Iris Leavis (née Levin) advises herself. "All the world is a stage, but they'll throw tomatoes at you if you play it straight. Your only chance is ad libbing and to hell with the script." If this ex-editor of the Hunter College *Bulletin*, determined to get on the staff of *Time* and eventually to feel at home on Fifth Avenue, seems to us a prosaic middle-class figure and an unconventional choice of heroine, it is obvious that to Mr. Morton a girl who voices this credo of cynical improvisation is not prosaic at all. To his still European perspective, she expresses the American success urge in its classic form. Fluent, self-appraising and formidably competent, the language of her five-day postgraduate memoir creates exactly that image of the American assaulted by the competitiveness and commercialism of his own culture toward which the European can feel alternately attracted and superior. But the image of Iris implacably bent on gaining a job or losing her virginity, keeping cool over a cocktail or hardboiled over love, plotting strategy or thwarting her instincts—is one conjured up by a visitor or a stranger. It has the monstrous purity of the vicarious report: too literal about symptoms, and dealing too symptomatically with single experiences.

But even from the distance at which he writes, Mr. Morton manages to make a rather shrewd estimate of the possible positions on the American success ladder. Balancing Iris's drive for public esteem is her self-immolating brother, Mordecai, in jangling war against other people's opinions. Bent on annihilating his own talents, he does in each situation what will doom him to failure. He is slovenly and incomprehensible with his parents, a militant advocate of world government at Cornell University, and even on the picket line cynical, excessive, and out of place—a preview of the alienated artist. Ex-boy friend Al, the wholesale grocer's accountant, is the American without much talent who is always trying, and fated to get along because he is useful to the real power-wielders of a managerial society. Sylvia, ostensibly the instinctive female, who respects only the moods and desire of her own body, is actually a professional bohemian, to whom wantonness is not pleasure but an entry ticket into the general competition. The only natural success in *Asphalt and Desire* is Egon Biml, a born entrepreneur who runs a summer camp for the Yorkville Democratic Society. A tough little fellow who wants money and has an aptitude for earning it without worrying about public opinion, Egon moves in the same direction as the world he lives in. Absurd but credible, he is a spiritual descendant of the robber barons, a belated arrival on the American industrial scene, which has saved him only space enough to look forward to a summer camp or a motel of his own.

Mr. Morton is most humorous and closest to the truth when he deals with such characters as Al and Egon, who are peripheral to the subject of his satire. He does best with his more moderate and modest scenes: Alvin at

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Longchamps muffling a laugh to avoid spraying Iris with shrimp; Iris discreetly and completely dressed in tan, envisioning a lethal triumph over the personnel interviewer of an employment agency; Iris's mother tasting a piece of pepper "with a coquettish tongue" as she announces a boy friend's phone call. Such writing, along with his mysterious grasp of urban American lingo—puns, insults, and double-takes—prove that Mr. Morton is not at all blind to the plainer aspects of American life. Also, and again amazingly, for a European, he is one of the few recent novelists who manages to sustain a non-tourist's view of New York. He takes a direct detailed interest in the appearance and tone of the city, describes streets for their own sake (a rare inclination in a generation of writers who name streets only to locate bars), and admirably avoids the city's glamor—even the glamor of bohemia—for its concrete sounds and places.

Yet when it comes to treating American values, he lets himself be taken in. His slick and aggressive little heroine is largely compounded of billboard, magazine, and department store culture. But it must be remembered that the standards of this culture can spread to its critics and infect the quality of their criticism. What stamps the recent novels that inveigh against the corruption of our mass media—like Frederick Wakeman's *The Hucksters* and John Brook's *The Big Wheel*—is their fundamental rapport with the milieu they condemn. Mr. Morton has the same tendency to limit his writing to the terms and outlook of a kind of person he presumably pities and rejects. Although his book is Iris's first-person narrative, Mr. Morton doesn't anywhere differentiate his own conception from her obsession that she is at the mercy of the "rat-race" and the "roller-coaster." The momentum of the roller-coaster so dazzles him that he loses the indispensable distinction between the critical spectator and the rider who is whirled around.

Tito, the White Violet

THE EAGLE AND THE ROOTS. By LOUIS ADAMIC. Doubleday. 531 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by R. F. TANNENBAUM

SEVEN months in Yugoslavia, in 1949, convinced the late Louis Adamic that his homeland was witnessing a great messianic rebirth of human and social values, called Titoism. This book, completed just before his mysterious, violent death last year, is his attempt to shout the good news. Like his previous writings, Adamic's picture of the New Yugoslavia is presented with a missionary fervor which completely overrides any semblance of objectivity, with almost nothing in the way of economic or social analysis, and not one word of criticism. To give only one example: Adamic was inspired by the spectacle of people engaged in voluntary unpaid labor (construction, snow-removal) as their contribution to the common good; that Yugoslavs who are slow to "volunteer" for these tasks are often deprived of their homes or their jobs seems to have entirely escaped his notice.

In Belgrade, the white city, where there is an avenue named for Charlie Chaplin as well as one for Tito, Adamic met all the leading architects of Titoism: Kardelj, Pijade, Kidric, Bebler, Rankovic, as well as Tito himself. Each is "gigantic" or "vibrant" or "da Vincian" or "simply loaded with personality." Tito is "almost too good-looking," "the acme of glamour." Yugoslavs tell Adamic: "Tito is everything to us. *Everything.*" Tito's name is scrawled on sidewalks, chimneys, walls, the wings of airplanes. In the streets, Communist students sing of "Tito the white violet." His appearance at a meeting is the signal for an explosion of rhythmic chanting and hand-clapping, bringing to the faces of the crowd a "curious fusion of . . . ecstasy and agony."

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What is the difference, Adamic asks, between "Hero Tito!" and "Duce! Duce!"?—the difference is that Tito is our white violet, who simply "couldn't be a tyrant; rather, he was the most obvious, perhaps the most emphatic nod in a vast, well-nigh incredible consensus." The closest parallel Adamic can find is—Wendell Willkie!

A good half of the book is taken up by a biography of Tito, in which Adamic tries to explain this "complex leader-people ecology." This is certainly the best part of the book, for Tito's story is a real saga and Adamic tells it well. From Tito's career as a Communist leader Adamic draws two leading ideas. The first is that the Yugoslav Communist party's break with Moscow was more than justified, and indeed should have taken place in the 1920's, for Moscow had for years been keeping the various Communist parties in a state of semi-crippled dependence, stifling every possibility of revolutionary action; Stalin the Russian imperialist, preoccupied with the struggle for world power, had become a counter-revolutionary, and a "revisionist" of Marxism. "Wasn't Stalin a revisionist long before the Cominform outburst?" It is Adamic who asks the question, and Tito's answer is "Yes." "Then why label him [as such] only now?" To this there is no definite answer anywhere in the book, neither from Tito, who faithfully served Moscow for thirty years, nor from Adamic, who defended Soviet Communism through most of his career.

Adamic's second main idea is that Yugoslavia's wartime experience has made her unique among the nations, politically and spiritually. The "Borba," the civil war which was at once resistance and revolution, has left sensitive scars in Yugoslavia which excuse its attacks on American planes and justify its persecution of the church. The "Borba" called forth from the whole people a spirit of heroic self-sacrifice and communal purpose, which, carried over into the present, is epitomized in the symbol of Tito. The "New Man" of Socialism is emerging in Yugoslavia; Adamic is overwhelmed by his energy, his avidity, his enthusiasm. The whole country is caught up in a wild surge of creativity; at the Slovenian Academy of Fine Arts, all the models are aged men and women, for "no young person will just sit or stand still nowadays." What can be said to this, except that less biased observers than Adamic have been able to find apathy and muddle in Yugoslavia without digging very deep at all?

But Adamic sees only a fervid will to the good life, and in this he finds nothing less than the hope of the world. Yugoslavia can lead the progressive forces of the world, hounded by American reaction, betrayed by Russian Stalinism, to a new birth of freedom. This alone can prevent the war between the imperialist giants; this alone can save America from impending spiritual collapse; "America needs Titoism."

I have been able to give only a bare idea of the highly charged atmosphere of this book. Rambling and repetitious, it laboriously tries for an impression of artless free association. Adamic admired *Moby Dick* and *Nostromo,* and borrowed badly from both: Conrad's romanticism and Melville's hyperbole. And yet the intensity of his sense of mission does give this last book, despite its errors, some of the grandeur of prophecy, and offers a clue to the psychological need that led the author to a position sympathetic to Communism.

For Adamic, America was the land of opportunity, but never of fulfillment. Something was lacking in American life, and he went back to Europe to find it. Deeply disappointed that life was not a perpetual clapping of hands and chanting of the names of heroes, he found satisfaction in the malignant spiritual stimulant of leader-worship. But it was Adamic who needed that stimulant, not America.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Irving Kristol, formerly managing editor of Commentary, is now executive secretary of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

Arthur Hertzberg is now a chaplain with the U.S. armed forces in England.

Edward N. Saveth is on the staff of the American Jewish Committee. He is the author of *American Historians and European Immigrants.*

Isa Kapp reviews fiction regularly for Commentary.

R. F. Tannenbaum is a free-lance political journalist.

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by Victor Hugo*

"IF FOUR CENTURIES AGO, some one had dared to predict to Lorraine, to Picardy, to Normandy, to Brittany, to Auvergne, to Provence, to Dauphiné, to Burgundy—'A day shall come when you will no longer make wars: You will still have disputes to settle, but do you know what you will substitute instead of armed men: You will select a small box of wood, a ballotbox, and from which shall issue—what?—an assembly, which shall decide, judge, resolve everything—which shall make the sword fall from every hand, and excite the love of justice in every heart. You will no longer be Burgundy, Normandy, Brittany, or Provence—you will be France!'

"If some one had uttered these words, all prudent men would have cried out, 'What a dreamer!'

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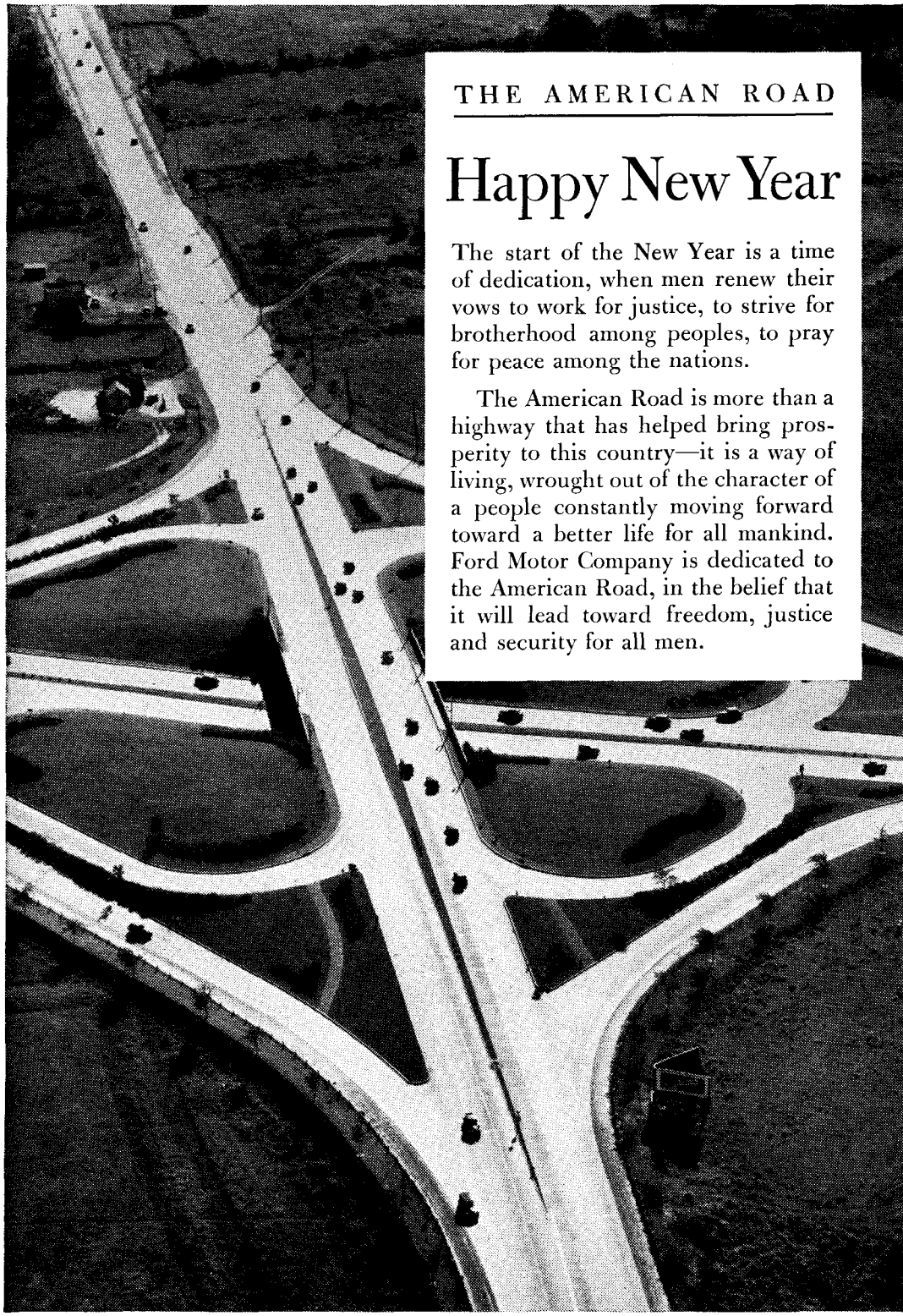

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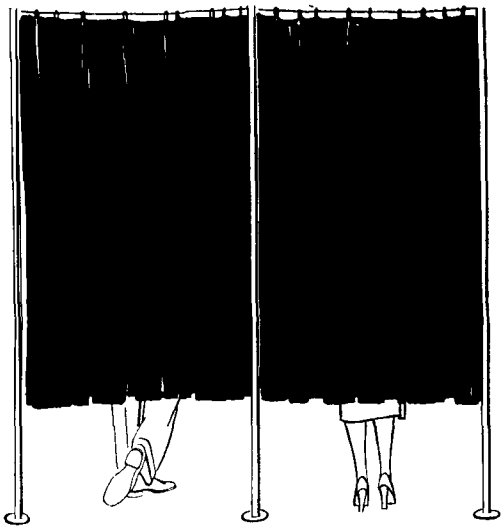

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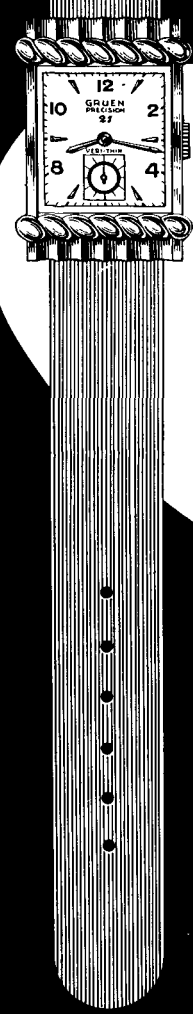

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